

AN

Husbandmans Harrow

to pull down the Ridges of the

PRESBYTERIALl GOVERNMENT

and to smoooth, a little, the

I N D E P E N D E N T.

That they and others may walk together upon plain
Scripture Grounds, without stumbling on the
ridgedness of either, or both.

Containing divers new and unanswerable Argu-
ments, properly deduced from Sacred Scriptures to this
purpose, that have never yet been proposed by any on either partee,
Which induceth the Husbandman to make thus bold
whether welcome or no.

And having prooved also the said Scripturall Argu-
ments, that like *teeth of steel*, they will pull down the Ridges, be-
fore they break or bend; having been forced to try them
upon ridged lands: because he could not walk upon
either of their grounds without stumbling
on the Ridges.

Written by ELLIS BRADSHAWV of the Parish of *Bolton*,
in the County of *Lancaster*, Husbandman.

L O N D O N,

Printed for the Author, and are to be sold at the *black spread Eagle*
at the West end of *Pauls*. 1649.

Husband and Harrow

To pull down the Ridges of the

RESBY TERRACE OF BIRMINGHAM

and to build the

INDUSTRIAL

and others may well together upon plain

and others may well together upon plain

containing three new and interesting

and others may well together upon plain

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To the Reader.

Beloved Brethren; Who ever you be that shall read
or hear, and understand these things that are
here exprest. I desire briefly in the name of God,
and the Lord Iesus Christ, to admonish and ex-
hort you, to kinde, and encourage you in the
ways of truth, of meekness, and of righteous-
nes, as Psal. 45. & Hebr. 1.

But to daunt, and daunt, and discourage the adversaries in eve-
ry respect, wherein they doe oppose, or exalt themselves against the
Lord Iesus, or against his scepter; you, against his Kingdom,
against his truth, and meekness, and righteousness, as Hebr. 1.
4, 5, &c.

For the time is come, that he hath taken to himself (even) his
great power, and hath in (measure) reigned, as Revel. 11:17.

Nay, there is heard (already, even) a loud voyce, saying in hea-
ven; (to wit, in the Church) Now is salvation, and strength, and
the Kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the
accuser of our brethren, (to wit, Satan) is already cast down,
which accused them before our God day and night, as Revel. 12.
8, 9, 10, 11.

And they have (in measure already) overcome by the blood of
the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony. And if you aske
(who) that have thus overcome. They are plainly noted. What
stamp they are [of:] For they are of such, as have not loved their
lives unto the very death. This is their stamp, and let it be their
Motto; for there is none more proper, neither any more precious,
or truly honourable among the Sons of men.

And therefore dejoyce ye heavens, (to wit, ye Churches) and
ye that dwell in them.

But we be to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the Sea, for

the Devil himself is come down upon you, and that living in
wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time, till he must be
clofed, and chained up, in the bottomless pit, for a thousand years,
as Chap. 20. 1, 2, 3. for he must be shut up, and a seale set upon
him, that he shall deceive the Nations no more, till the thousand
years shall be fulfilled: though after that he must be loosed, for a little
season.

And therefore to dank, and dant, and discourage the Adver-
saries: and for terror and amazement, even to the people of
Ira, such as fear his Name, whether they be small or great. And
should be engaged on the adversaries part; against Michael, and
against his Angels, as Revel. 12. 7. Bden against him, I mean.
That is the first and the last, that liveth, and was dead, but is
now alive for evermore, Amen: who hath the keys of hea-
ven and of death, Chap. 1. 17, 18.

Yea, for terror unto such, as shall engage against him; I
might write a Book, not only within, but on the backside; like
that spoken of in Ezekiel; And all full, even of bitter lamenta-
tions, and mourning, and woes.

Though it is doubtful, it should but be in (vain to the
part.) For even the people of God; that are his Elect and
precious, are many of them (growing) over secure, and care-
less; yea, dull and incapable of any deep impressions, either
of fears, or hopes: and they are too apt, either not to [hear]
or when they have heard, to let the words slip, as Heb. 2. 14, 15,
and so incur to themselves so much greater judgements, unless they
repent.

And therefore, woe, woe, and alas! for ever, to all that do but
neglect; much more, that despise so great salvation, Hebr. 2. 3,
4, 10, 11.

Ten, woe, woe, and alas! for ever, to the inhabitants of the
earth that forget God.

And above all, unto them, that in measure know God, and yet
in no measure will glorifie him as God; neither are thankful; but
become vaine in their imaginations, &c. as Rom. 1. 21. Yea, who
have changed the truth of God into a lye: and worshipped, and
served the creature (yea any creature) more then the Creator, who
is God indeed, blessed for ever, Amen.

Yea,

Yea, wee, wee, and wee, for wee, and wee, whoe not knowing
eternall God in their knowledge, nor in their minds and thoughts,
shall give them over to a reprobate mind, to doe those
things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteous-
ness, &c. as the particulars are enumerated, Rom. 1. 29, 30,
31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52.

122. Woe unto the world because of offences. And though it
must needs be, that offences shall come; yet woe unto such, by
whom they come. It were better for them that a Millstone were
hung about their necks, and they were cast into the Sea, than that
they should offend but one of the least of these little ones, that be-
lieve in Christ, as *Matth. 18. 6. 3. 12. 14.*

And what ever men thinke, yea, though they care not to despise
or offend, and reproach, yea even murder and destroy, and seek
to blot out, even the very names and posterities of any such little
ones, that believe in Christ, making no more account of the kil-
ling of such, then of so many Fleas.

Yea, it is not the will of their heavenly Father, that so much as one
of these little ones should perish, as *vers. 14.* And therefore it is,
that he doth admonish us, how to deale with such, if they tres-
pass against us, *vers. 15, &c.* For precious in the sight of the Lord is
the death of his Saints. And he will doubtless preserve their souls,
though cruel Cains, shall destroy their bodies: yea, he will doubt-
less preserve the faithful, and plenteously reward every proud
doer.

But let it admonish such who are faithfull, and that obey his
voeice, to take heed unto themselves; and if their brethren sin a-
gainst them, tell them of their faults; and if they repene, forgive
them, &c. yea, though seven times over in one day, as *Matth. 18.*
For we are not allowed to hate our brethren in our hearts; but to
tell them of their faults plainly. Neither is it lawfull to judge and cen-
sure them, as *Rom. 15. 4. 7, 10, 12, 13, 19, 22, &c.* Chap. 15. 1, 2, 3,
5, 6, 7, according to appearance, but righteous Judgement. We
are not allowed to account them as enemies, but to admonish them
as brethren; yea though they so far disobey, even the Apostles
living, as that we are necessarily engaged, to withdraw from them,
as *1 Thess. 3. 6.*

And therefore wee unto such, what ever they be, whether Pres-
byterians, or Independants, thus shall tell the truth, of which they
are

were convinced, and speak through partial respects to their own party, seek the destruction either of other, and remain impenitent, and malign, and hate, and despite their brethren, because in every respect they cannot second each of their minds, nor walk with them in their ways, where yet notwithstanding if partially do not blind their eyes, they may both see faults in their own ways, in which they are engaged, which no engagement ought to bind them to maintain or abide in after they are discovered, but they ought freely to confess their faults each to others, as James 4. 11, 12. & Chap. 5. 16. being convinced of them, and both of them ought to consent freely to the wholesome words of our Lord and Saviour even Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, & not to teach otherwise; but if any do, the Apostle telleth us plainly, (and we are apt to believe it,) That such are puffed up, and know nothing, but dote about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil surmising, perverse disputings, of men, of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: And biddeth Timothy, from such to withdraw himself, 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

And we are apt to do as he advised Timothy, for if it was good for Timothy, it is in all likelihood good for us also; and how shall we think such men honest, that will not approve of the things that are honest, as the Apostle injoyneth them in another place? For it is not enough not to oppose, or resist; and speak against such things, but they ought to approve them, and testify their assent and agreement thereunto, so far forth as they are apparently honest or true, &c. else they do implicitly oppose and resist them, or show their unwillingness to embrace and obey them, and that they are stubborn and rebellious, and even at enmity with God in those respects, because he crosseth them even in their own devices and ways, &c. And doubtless many good men in these our days are deeply engaged in this very sin, and yet we are not allowed to judge and condemn them as enemies and Apostates, but should love, and pity, and pray for them, considering our selves as also subject to the same failings.

Beloved Brethren, The Scripture is clear concerning Jonas, that he was a Prophet of the Lord, and was immediately called and sent of God, as a Prophet and famous man, to prophesie against Nineve, and yet because that he knew the goodness and mercy of God, that

that upon repentance he would pardon; he was unwilling even to preach the preaching which the Lord commanded him, in all likelihood, lest his former prophesying should be the worse credited; and how rebelliously he carried and demeaned himself, till he was forced through extremity by the power of God, to submit unto him, and humble himself, and out of the belly of hell even to cry unto him: And after all that, being but a little afflicted for want of the gourd, how passionately angry and reney he was, and durst profess stubbornly, even in the presence of God, speaking it vocally unto him, that he did well to be angry, even to the very death; like a man desperate, and as he had been at enmity even with God himself; and yes he was, doubtless, a man inspired with the Spirit of God, and very intimate and familiar with him: Look for this
COAS 4.

And therefore strange is the temper, and natural frailties and dispositions (by nature) of some good men:

May, who can we read of almost in Scripture, though never so bold and fully inspired, but we may read likewise of their failings and infirmities, and of some of their gross and notorious sins; as David in the matter of Uriah, Peter in his dissimulation, and building up that by his practise, which he destroyed by his doctrine: and Paul had his infirmities and pricks in the flesh, after his conversion and calling to the Ministry. Elias also was a man subject to like passions as the Apostles were, who confessed themselves subject to like passions as others, Acts 14. 15. and yet they were men full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost: so was Barnabas, so was Peter, so were all the Apostles, and many others, in whom we might instance; and it would be useful to determine from murder, or [hanging] of their brethren, which is no better then [man-slaughter,] as 1 John 3.5. which many are too apt to take liberty to do, (because they see some faults and miscarriages in them,) as if it were a ground fully sufficient to excuse their malice, because they have some spirit, jealous flesh, as well as spirit: And they will not believe, that any such have the Spirit of God, because they have also a spirit of flesh, a Law in their members, by which they are led captive, against the Law of their minds; for they will not consider that they have but the Spirit of God in measure: And that it is needful they be sometimes left to their own strength, that they might remember, and freely acknowledge, by whose strength they stand,

stand,

band, and give the glory to God: for who is there, but is not
think, that their mountains are made strong, so that they shall ne-
ver be moved, and so judge, and censure, and condemn their bre-
thren, and say of themselves like the proud Pharisee, [We are not
like other men?] If they should not sometimes have prickings in the
Beth, and messengers of Satan sent to buffet them, a little matter
will puff us up: and therefore it is that the Apostle admonisheth,
that he that thinketh he standeth, should take (special) heed lest
he fall.

For by how much the more confident any man is in his own
strength, by so much the more likely he is to fall: And by how
much the more severe, rigorous, censorious, or uncharitable, any
man is in judging of others: by so much the more likely and sure
he is so to fall himself, as to be justly culpable of the same, or worse
than those whom he judged, condemned and censured.

And therefore it is, That Christ himself hath admonished us
Judge not, that you be not judged; Mat. 7. 1, 2, &c. Rom. 2. 1, to the
end. Chap. 7. and Chap. 14.

And should not they that are strong bear the infirmities of the
weak, but they must please themselves? Should not every one of
us please his neighbor in that which is good to edification, as Christ
himself also did? Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. and Chap. 14. and 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

Is it not the advice even of the Holy Ghost? Is it not the will
of our heavenly Father, that we should study the things that make
for peace, and that might provoke unto Love? Not unto Wrath,
nor to enmity nor hatred, but that which is the end of the Com-
mandment, and the very life and strength of all Community, and
of the Commonwealth: yea, the happiness and felicity of all King-
doms, yea, Governments, whatsoever, Civil or Ecclesiastical, and
the Subjects thereof.

And is it the only, or at least the chief sign of the dwelling of
God, either in or among us? If we love one another, God dwel-
leth in us, and his love is perfect in us: for God is love, and he that
dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him, 1 Joh. 4. 12,

16. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

And did not only so, but it is a token of his blessing likewise, for
there the Lord commandeth the blessing, yea, even permanent bleas-
sing, and that the chief of all, to wit, [Life] for evermore, that is
to say, where there is unity of brethren, and that they dwell so

together, Ps. 133. and continue in their love.

And though it be true that in some good measure the Spirit of
Him from God is already entred into the two Witnesses, and they
are creeping up to stand upon their feet; so that great fear is (in
measure) fallen upon them that saw (and insulted over) them, as
Rev. 11. 10, 11.

Yet, let us never expect the approbation of God, and to be called
up to heaven, nor to ascend in a cloud to such eminent respect in the
[Church universal] which is meant by [Heaven] Vers. 12. till
faith and love, which are the two proper and essential [Witnesses]
that are here meant, be inspired into us by the Spirit of life from
God, and shall raise and advance us, who are but the subjects in
whom they reside, and who are but the instruments in whom they
act, as a visible express of their invisible power and nature, &c. for
the glory of God, and the terror and amazement of all his adver-
saries: for it is by faith, if we prevail with God, or do any thing
worthy of respect with him, or in the sight of men, as Heb. 11.
And faith worketh by love; And he that believeth hath the wit-
ness in himself: See 1 John 4. 7, 8. So that if these two Witnesses
be inspired into us, and we be acted by them, it will be indeed to the
terror and amazement of all our enemies; that are enemies of God.

And there shall be such an earthquake in the same hour as shall
strengthen a remnant, who shall give glory to the God of Heaven;
And we shall bear a part in that triumphant song, Vers. 15. to 18.

And therefore Edifying one another in Faith and Love, which
is in Christ Jesus, ought to be the end and chief endeavor of all
our business in Church affairs, as it is the end of the whole Law,
and as I hope in God it shall be mine, Who am,

Your Brother in

the Lord Jesus,

Ellis Bradshaw.

A

The

The Contents.

Containing by way of preambulation, the grounds and Rules, according to which the following Discourse is held forth, drawn from the end of the Commandment, Which is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

1. First, shewing the end of the Commandment to be better in value, and more to esteemed then the means to accomplish it, and therefore ought to be chiefly eyed in all the way that leadeth thereto.

2. Secondly, the Illustration and application of the foresaid end of the Commandment, prescribed as four Rules, to try all Laws, Arguments, Doctrines, & moralls by, whether they lead properly to the end of the Commandment, or no, that so we may embrace, or avoid them as we ought to do.

3. Thirdly, four grounds and arguments drawn from Scripture, as intending, and tending to a Reconciliation of the Churches of God, in respect of the Government and Discipline thereof.

1. The first from the lawfulness of Chastity.

2. The second from the lawfulness of community of goods, amongst such who can so agree, or the claiming of propriety amongst such who cannot.

3. The third from the lawfulness of fasting, and prayer, or of eating and drinking.

4. And the fourth from the lawfulness of such, who think they ought to belong to the strictest Set of the true Religion, such as were the Pharisees, or one more remisse, such as was the Scribes.

Intending thereby to make clear, that no man ought to blame another, for being more strict and consciencious, then he himself is.

as it may be engaged, or ought to be, his calling of God, and in-
gaging him to it, as it doth the other, being bound in spirit to
the quite contrary, and in conscience both.

Page 12.

And on the other part, That those that are stricter ought not to
blame such as are more remiss in some respects, because for
ought they know, they are so engaged, and called of God, and ei-
ther bound in conscience, or bound in spirit, within their own
Sphere.

Page 12.

Conced. The consequence whereof being to this purpose, That they
ought not therefore to compel each other, unto conformity, either
to the strictness of the one, or the remissness of the other, proving
that the Magistrate ought to tolerate, or suffer both, and not
to engage them one against the other.

Page 12.

Fourthly, The application of the aforesaid grounds, and argu-
ments to the matter in hand; to wit, to the Churches, and the
government thereof.

Page 13, 14, 15.

Fifthly, First the application of the aforesaid grounds and con-
clusions by way of just reproof unto both parties, because they do
not agree, and live, and love, and carry as brethren.

Page 15.

In which end the Rule of Charity is proposed, and a little pro-
secuted.

Page 16, 17, 18.

The punctual application of the precedent conclusions are briefly
asserted; first to the one, and secondly to the other, and a general
consequence concluded thence.

Page 19.

An objection proposed and answered at large; to wit, that se-
veral Presbyteries plead that Independents Rules and ways of di-
scipline, are not more strict, but more remiss, and loose in many
respects, giving way for liberty of all Religions without con-
troule by the Civil State, as so they speak of them: Page.

Page 19.

It is answered at large, That the Rules and Principles, according
to which they engage to all, are manifestly stricter, and tim-
bered, in divers particulars, which are held fast in several
assertions, wherein likewise they are engaged, in duty and con-
science, so to do. Though it is not denied, but many Presbyte-
rians are engaged in conscience to do the contrary, and are fully
persuaded that they ought so to do for the time present.

Page 20.

It is asserted, That they are justly stricter with whom they do
incorporate

incorporate and joyn themselves in Church policy, because that, so far forth as their joyning together hath respect to the policy and government of the Church, no Church can be so strict.

pag. 20.

Though, in other respects, they ought to joyn according to the rule of Charity, and not of Certainty, as in administration of the Word and Sacraments, as 1 Cor. 16. 14. Chap. 13. & Chap. 10. 32, 33.

2. It is asserted, That (for the same ends, and reasons, and reasons, alledged in the former) they are justly strit and conscientiously, and teach it as a duty, That all that are found, and known to be men of approved fidelity, within convenient bounds, should thus incorporate and joyn themselves; and to engage themselves in Covenant unto God, for better security and deeper engagements unto all brotherly and Christian duties, and to deal impartially in all such business, as concerns them all, for the glory of God, and the Churches good; and to be wise as serpents, though innocent as doves.

P. 21, 22.

3. It is asserted, and proved at large, That the Principles of Independents are stricter, and noerer to the Scripture rules, for edifying of the Church, in that they do not limit the holy one of Israel to speak in publique by the learned only.

P. 22 to 47.

For proving Whereof, 1. It is asserted from 1 Cor. 12. 7, to 12. That naturally and manifestly flows from hence; That to whomsoever the manifestation of the Spirit is given, it is given to such to profit withall.

pag. 23.

2. It is proved against an objection to the contrary, That such who have the Spirit of God, and are spiritualized thereby, may discern all things, yea, the deep things of God, as 1 Cor. 2. 10. 13. yea, though they be unlearned in the tongues; And that the manifestations of the Spirit may be evident and demonstrable, even in these our days, to such who are spiritual, though not unto others, as vels. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Pag. 23. 24.

3. The particular gifts, or notes, or qualifications, or operations, or administrations, are the chief of them produced from sacred Scripture, whereby the manifestation of the Spirit of God, and of power, &c. may be evident and demonstrable in such as are not of those that are learned in the Tongues, nor graduates in the Schools, even in these our days, yea, and that in such

who

who do no miracles: To prove a mediocrity? pag. 24.
It is offered and proved against an Objection, That these parti-
cular gifts and administrations, which are reckoned up by the
Apostle Paul, cannot be favoured as far as by the church, but they
may easily be discerned by those that are spiritual. pag. 25.
And so that purpose there is divers Notes from sacred Scripture,
which (being found in any) do prove for certain, and do evi-
dently demonstrate, that it is indeed even the Spirit of God that
speaketh in them, yea though they do no miracles in. pag. 25.

The first from John 7. 18.

From John 10. 10. 38.

From James 1. 17, 18.

From John 16. 8.

From 1 Cor. 4. 5. & Chap. 14. 24, 25.

From John 3. 21.

From Phil. 2. 15, 16. & Ephes. 5. 13, 14.

But that the chiefest of all these particulars, or any that can be
exhibited, is a clear understanding and knowledge of God, and of
the sacred Scriptures, and the secrets thereof, and of the secrets
and mysteries of the sacred Kingdom: Because without all con-
troversie, great is the mystery of godliness, as the Apostle saith,
Col. 1. 26, 27, 28. Rom. 16. 25. Ephes. 3. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Titus

1. 2. pag. 27.

To which a Reason is rendered, drawn from the contrary, Luke 8. 10.

Mark 4. 33, 34. Mat. 13. Ibid.

And a Consequence gathered, backed with 1 Cor. 4. 5. & Mat. 10. 19. Ibid.

And an Objection answered, to satisfy such who count it im-
modest. pag. 28.

1. And another to satisfy such who object, That speaking unto men
to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort, is not properly to
prophecy, because prophesying is foretelling of things to come;
which is fully answered, and clearly vindicated, that it is pro-
perly prophesying, as the Apostle asserteth it from Heb. 11. 1.
& John 10. 10. & 1 John 5. 11, 12, 13. 1 Cor. 14. 13, 14. And
the chief of all for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the work
of the Ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ,
Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. pag. 29.

2. And secondly, That it is a more present evidence and demon-
stration

stration of the Spirit then shewing of things to come, as Anglin did; for till the things be come, they do not manifest the Spirit of God.

3. And thirdly, The danger is shew'd to those that despise, or resist, and disparage these things in ways, &c. or to any authority that will not suffer it, and give liberty to all them, whose spirit God hath raised, to build up the Churches in their most holy faith, lest wrath be upon them from the Lord, as Eccl. 1.5, 6. & Chap. 13. 16, 23. & Chap. 8. 22, 23. & Plal. 2.

Yes, that it is a matter of dangerous consequence, either to comply with such; shew'd by many Reasons; and all Objections answered fully, which are too many, and too long to abbreviate.

4. Assertion is, concerning their Independency, in respect of other Churches, whiles they do well, as Rom. 13. 3, 4. & 1 Pet. 3. 10 the 23. & Chap. 4. 1, 2. & 12. with the Reasons that necessarily engage them so to stand, which are unanswerable.

5. Assertion is, concerning their maintaining the Power and Kingdom, and Supremacy of Christ; in which it is shew'd, that they necessarily assume Democracy to maintain his Monarchy against Antichristian tyranny and usurpation.

6. Assertion is, That they are justly stricter in keeping themselves within their own sphere, in not judging those that are without in the Apostles sense, 1 Cor. 5. 12. in a spiritual way, as Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17.

Having done with the Presbyterians for the time present, here is three grand particulars insisted in against the Independents, and punctually argued from Scripture grounds.

1. First, Concerning Ordination of Ministers, and other Officers,

2. Secondly, Concerning the authoritative acting of an Assembly of Churches in the Name of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,

Whereas it is prov'd, that withdrawing of Communion is not sufficient, but they ought to proceed to an Excommunication, or excommunication, if their sins be a defilement, as for toleration of Idolatry, Blasphemy, and such heinous sins in their Church Members or Officers.

3. Thirdly, Concerning their strictness in trial of all whom they admit

admit to partake of the Sacraments, which is named pag. 68.
but prosecuted and argued against them from pag. 72. to the
end of the Book.

But betwixt pag. 68. and pag. 72. the Authors apprehensions, parti-
ly abbreviating what hath formerly been said, are proposed briefly
by way of Result; and then Objections answered concerning
this main difference about admission to the Sacraments, and
other particulars before named, to the end of the Book.

Forasmuch as the Author doth in all things hold forth Charity,
which is the bond of perfectness, *Col. 3. 14.* and that we are
bound to prove all things, hold fast that which is good, *1 Thes. 5. 21.*
Therefore, I say unto the ensuing Treatise,

August 9.
1649.

Imprimatur

THEODORE JENNINGS.

admits to partake of the Sacrament, which is named pag. 68.
 but protected and regarded with them from pag. 72. to the
 end of the Book.
 In between pag. 68. and pag. 72. the author says: "I have
 by no means intended to say that I am protected
 by way of Recall; and then Objections against concerning
 this main difference about admission to the Sacrament, and
 other particulars before named, to the end of the Book."

Therefore I have into the ensuing Treatise,
 found to prove all things hold fast that which is good, & be-
 which is the bond of patience, Col. 3. 14. and that which
 Ourselves as the Author doth in all things hold forth Christ.

Impression

1649

THEODORE JENNINGS

An
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An Husbandmans Harrow to pull down
the Ridges of the Presbyteriall Go-
vernment, and to smooth a little the
Independent; that both they and o-
thers might walk together upon plaine
Scripture grounds without stumbling
on the Ridgedness of either or both.



He end of a thing (saith wise *Solomon*) is better
then the beginning thereof.

Therefore it follows, that the end of a thing
ought chiefly to be eyed as a mark to shoot at;
yea, as the complement, and perfection of all en-
deavours, and means; and waies to attain such
end.

And so likewise the Apostle *Paul*, by the spirit of God, giveth
us clearly to understand, *That the end of the Commandment is
love, out of a pure heart, and a good Conscience, and Faith un-
feined, 1 Tim. 1. 5.*

From which we may justly argue; That if Love, &c. be the end
of the Commandment: And if the end be better, then the means,
to attain it.

Cons. Then the means for the accomplishment, (and that should
lead unto, or acquire such an end,) ought not to be pleaded, or set
against; nor valued and esteemed above the end.

Reas. For then it utterly frustrates, and makes the meanes void,
if we rob or spoile it of its proper end; And so both end and
means are utterly vain.

B

Instance.

Instance. As for Instance he that pleadeth the Law against Justice or Legality of proceedings in matter of State, against the good, and peace, and safety of the people.

He pleadeth against both the Law, and justice, and against the good and safety of the people: And not only so, but he disparageth the Law, and legall proceedings. As if they intended not, or at least, were not able to attaine their end, but were made on purpose to obstruct such Justice, as ought to be their end, for which they are made.

And though it is true, that the Law of God, being of absolute perfection, can never properly be so pleaded; yet unjustly, and improperly, it both may, and is; though it ought not so to be, but the quite contrary, as hath been said.

But how much more ought the Lawes of men, (being not absolutely perfect, nor sufficiently wise to attain their end) never to be pleaded; but with chief reference, and cleare respect to the end thereof.

So that he that objects, or pleads them at all; should hold forth with them, even the end it self; and should make it manifest, how the Law he pleadeth, tendeth as a means, to acquire unto, or bring about such end: Left he plead the Law against Justice, as some have done; though deeply learned in the Lawes of the Land; Endangering thereby, to establish Arbitrary, Tyrannicall power, greater then before: concerning which, there is enough already, and at large exprest to the whole Kingdom.

Only this I add, that I cannot but wonder, how any rational man can ever desire such enslaving power; or delight to use it, if he had it granted, considering

1. First, they can never rationally, nor justly expect, nor be certainly assured, of the cordial affection of any such subjects, who are but subjected by Arbitrary, cruel and tyrannical power.

For all subjection, that is but meerly enforced, is evidently cleare to be defective in love.

2. Secondly all meer force by power, &c. is so far short of provoking unto love, or any cordial affection, or honor indeed; as that it disingageth and repels the affection, and force of love, and of all proper uniting principles; and quite diverterth them into enmity and hatred, and disesteem: especially, in case, when the honor and service which is forced unto, is not just and proper; but undue, unsuitable.

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3. Thirdly, as the Scripture speaks, for a man to seek his own glory, is not glory, no, it is his shame; for when pride commeth, then cometh shame: and it is not only lawful but even the bounden duty of them that love the Lord, to hate evil, as pride and arrogance, and the evill way. And even the mouth that speaketh proud things, they ought to hate.

Fourthly, What honor is it, or what glory, or renown, for a man to Rule and have the command; yea, or to sway a Scepter over a Kingdom of slaves? Were it not his shame amongst Kingdoms of men? And what renown could he possibly get in time of Wars, by leading forth his slaves to battel, to engage them in service against Armies of men?

Would they not cowardly desert him, and leave him naked, rather then lose their lives, which are alwaies deare unto slavish men? they are alwaies so ignoble, and of such timorous spirits, in case of danger.

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By the just judgement of the merciful God, who loveth mercy, but hateth cruelty, wrong, and tyranny, and will avenge it, though Justice faile in the hands of men, one time or other, look *Isai. 14. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.* Look also *vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.* For the same measure, that men mete unto others; the same shall be measured unto them again.

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But were we thoroughly rational, how could we be proud, that we dust and ashes, and know our selves such, and that we are but mortall?

Seeing he alone, who is the only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, hath immortality, and dwelleth in light which

is inaccessible, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom alone be ascribed, honour and power everlasting, *Amen, Amen.*

But thus much briefly, by way of Introduction, or preambulation, to what I chiefly intend to fall upon, as of all points most meet and necessary, to be insisted on in these contentious, quarrellous, and perillous times: I mean, in regard of that great dissention, that is now amongst us, about the Churches Government, and discipline, &c. Concerning which, I shall endeavour, through the grace of God, to keep close to the principles that I have premised, and that as briefly as may be. And shall cast in also even this poor mite into the Churches Treasury, and that by way of proposal, as ayming chiefly at the proper end, which is the end of the Commandement, as hath been said.

For without all controversie, That which is the end of all the Commandements, should be all our ends, in all our endeavours, and undertakings.

But the undoubted end of all the Commandements, is doubtless, [Love] out of a pure heart, and good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned.

This therefore being the proper end; I shall hold it forth in all the means, that I shall propose, from the Law of God; and shall carry it along in my own intencion; and also make it manifest, as much as possible, how such means, properly tenderth to atchieve that end; and how useful and necessary such means is, to attain thereunto, the Lord assisting: who is able to do it, and so make it clear.

1. And first then, because if it do appeare to be against [Love] To God above all, and our Neighbours as our selves. It is worthy to be rejected; for even the whole Law is contained in this; Yea, what ever it be that is against Love, is against God; for God is Love, and Love cometh of God; and is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost; and if we be partakers of this divine love which is shed in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost; We are made partakers of the godly nature; and it is of all others, the first and chiefest of those fruits of the Spirit, and the most essentiall, 1 Joh. 4. 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 17. And so is a clear evidence, That God dwelleth

dwelleth in us, and we in him; for the love of God is essentially of God, such love, I meane as cometh of God.

2. And secondly, If it do appear to be against this love, out of a pure heart; it is also worthy to be rejected; for what ever Law, Doctrine, or argument shall be proposed, to oblige men to impurity, either in heart, or life, It is without all controversie against the Law of God; for *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*, and men ought to keep themselves pure, *Mat. 5. 8. 1 Tim. 5. 22.* Especially in heart, for thereout cometh the issues of life.

3. Thirdly, if it be propos'd against a good Conscience, it is worthy to be rejected, as not included in the Law of God.

For all Laws, Doctrines, or Arguments, whatsoever they are that would ingage us against a good Conscience, manifestly grounded on the Word of God, and of sound Doctrine, that cannot be reproved; we ought to reject them, and yeeld no obedience, nor approbation thereunto, either in obedience unto men, or to please them, &c. For we must not be men pleasers, nor servants of men, but obey God rather then men; and ought to love, and therefore serve, and honor, and please him, rather then men. For all the men in the whole Universe, cannot by any means give men liberty of Conscience to commit sinne; if their Conscience tell them, and be convinced from the Law of God, that they ought not to do it, as *Rom. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.*

But their Consciences, will accuse, and condemne them also; and that in the day of Judgement, when God shall Judge the secrets of men, by **JESUS CHRIST**, according to the Gospel.

Therefore, as they cannot properly give men liberty of Conscience, no more then save, and exempt men from punishment due for their sinnes against Conscience; they ought not to binde, or engage men to obedience unto any Law, against a good Conscience, rightly grounded on the Law of God, as hath been said; But should give men libertie, to be as strict and severe, and as carefull, and watchful, and as inquisitive as they please, how to keep a good Conscience, voyd of offence both to God and men.

4. Fourthly, if any Law, or argument, or motion whatsoever, shall be made against Faith; to wit, unfaigned Faith, As that we should not beleeve or trust in God, but in something else; or that we should beleeve, or put hope and confidence in any thing else; or that we should not beleeve whatsoever he saith, or propoeth to us in his sacred Word, or biddeth us beleeve, &c. We ought to reject it; yea, though all the men and Churches in the World, would engage us to beleeve, what they assest and resolve upon, as being most able, because wise and learned; and because a multitude of Counsellors to determine and resolve, what ought to be beleeved in such a case.

Yet if we certainly know, that the Word of God affirmeth the contrary; we ought to beleeve it, and to reject their resolves, and counsels and assertions, be they what they will; and must not conform, nor comply with them, nor approve the same. But if an Angel from heaven, or the whole world being become an *Arrian*, should decree, or teach us, the *Arrian* heresie, we should let him be accursed; and so also for any other Doctrine, then may be made manifest, as it ought to be, from sacred Scripture.

There is a time spoken of *Zach. 13.* when men shall be so zealous against false Prophets, and false Propheysing, that a mans father and his mother that begat him, shall say unto him, thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lyes in the name of the Lord; and his father and his mother, that begat him, shall thrust him through, when he prophesie, *Zach. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.*

We must therefore resolve, to let God be true, and every man a liar, and therefore rather to beleeve him, then all, and every, or any man in the whole world. And also we must and ought to draw neerer unto God, in full assurance of Faith, not casting away our confidence in God, which hath great recompence of reward; for faith in God is of all other graces, Love excepted, the most chief and principal, and the most essential; for it is said of Faith and Love, that they are in Christ Jesus; yea, though now in heaven. It is not said, that they were in Christ, to wit, when he was on earth; but that they are in Christ Jesus; for when the Apostle writ so of him, he was ascended already into heaven; yea, and though he be in heaven, yet he is said to dwell in mens hearts by Faith.

And therefore such faith may well be called a precious faith, being so properly essential to the spirit of Christ; as the

where Faith dwelleth, Christ also dwelleth properly and essentially; and by his holy spirit: for faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus, are not onely fruits, but they are essentiall witnesses of his holy Spirit abiding in us: *He that beleeueth* (saith the Apostle) *hath the witness in himself: 1 Joh. 5. 10.* And so he that loveth, it is also a witness that he is born of God, and knoweth God, *Chap. 4. 7.* and that he also dwelleth in us, *vers. 12.* and that he hath given us of his spirit, *vers. 13.* And so *That We are made partakers of the godly nature,* 2 Pet. 1. 4. and have in some measure, even the mind of Christ, and the spirit of Christ, though yet but in measure, because of our finite capacities: whereas in Christ, even the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily, or rather essentially.

Therefore it follows, That what ever Arguments, or Laws, or Doctrines, make against Faith, or that but tend to the weakening thereof, or that would hinder our edifying, and being built up in faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus, should utterly be rejected, as ungodly, unjust, untrue, opposite, and contradictory to the law of God, and to his Sacred Word, which is one, and cannot be broken, nor alleged properly for such an end; And therefore these three Rules may stand as cautions, that we admit not any thing, contrary hereunto; though it should be urged, and presented to us, as proposed, or commanded, in the name of God; or as being founded on his sacred Word: For if it crosse, or oppose, or would deprive us, or make void to us this end of the Commandement, to wit, Love our of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned; it is false, and wicked, and that which will not stand with the Law it self, and therefore ought to be rejected of all good men: And therefore with full purpose to keep to these Rules, as the end of what I do intend, I shall further propose these ensuing Grounds and Arguments, both as intending and tending to a Reconciliation, and full Agreement of the Church of God, in respect of government, and the Discipline thereof, as hereafter follows.

1 Ground is, That it is lawful, yea, and the bounden duty of some men, and of some women, to be more abstemious from things lawful themselves, and to bind themselves to a stricter Discipline then others need to engage themselves, or be bound unto, or be abstemious from.

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1 *Ground* is, That it is lawful, yea, and the bounden duty of some men, and of some women, to be more abstentious from things lawful in themselves, and to bind themselves to a stricter Discipline then others need to engage themselves, or be bound unto, or be abstentious from.

Reas. For it is the duty of some men, and of some women, to make themselves chaste for the Kingdom of Heavens sake, *Mat. 19. 12. & 1 Cor. 7.*

For.

For the Kingdom of heavens sake, that is to say, That they might be more free, both from the cares of this life, and from all carnal engagements, or disturbances, or distractions, and inducements whatsoever; that might either trouble, or molest them, or engage their mindes, or withdraw their affections, or hinder their devotions, both of bodies and spirits, in respect of God.

But that they might fully consecrate, and devote themselves, both soules and bodies, to the sacred government of his grace and spirit; that the Kingdom of God, by his grace and spirit, might have full scope and dominion in them, both of their soules and bodies; and that they might more freely attend, and waite on the Lord, without separation, or without disturbance, or cumber, or distraction, by any meanes: But might glorifie God both in their bodies and spirits: And that with all their hearts, with all their soules, with all their minds, and with all their strength, as so the Law of God requires they should. For this is the measure of our love to God, that the Law requires, and that Christ exemplified, and commanded likewise, that he that can receive this, should receive it.

And it is also the Apostle *Pauls* advice, by the spirit of God, as better for such, who can abstain that they should not marry, if they had power over their own wills; that is to say, *had they gift of continencie*, as *Matth. 19. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 7. 37, 38, 39, 40.* and this also the Apostle exemplified, and wished that all men were even as he himself in that particular.

And thus therefore, I hope that no man will deny, but that it were better for *some*, both men and women; such especially, who have the gift of continencie, to abstain from Marriage, and make themselves chaste, for the Kingdom of Heavens sake, but that they may thus doe, *it is good for such not to touch a Woman*, as *1 Cor. 7. 1.*

And yet for all this, *Marriage is honourable amongst all men, and is ordained of God*, And some are called of God to that estate; and do in that estate, live a holy and a blameless life. *Enoch walked with God, after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters, Gen. 22. 24.* Of whom it was witnessed, *That he had pleased God, and that he was therefore translated, that he should not see death, Hebr. 11. 5.* And it was lawfull for *Peter* to lead about a wife, a sister, and so for the brethren of the Lord, and *Cephas*. And *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* were both
righteous,

righteous before the *God*, walking in the Commandements, and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, as *Luke* 1. 5, 6.

And *David* was a man after Gods own heart, save in the matter of *Uriah*: and yet had many Wives, and Concubines: And *Adam* in Innocency, before he sinned, had his wife, and was commanded to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, &c. And how else should men be multiplied, and succeed, &c. but by means of procreation, as God hath ordained, and appointed, and called men; as doubtless, he hath, some after this manner, and some after that: For it were a wicked Antichristian Doctrine, to forbid to marry, or to command to abstaine from meats, which God hath commanded, to be received with thanksgiving, *1 Tim.* 4. 3, 4, 5.

But such who are so called, and inclin'd for marriage, are not very suitable for consociation with such as make themselves chaste, nor they for them, in these respects.

2. And secondly, It is lawful for some, to give all their goods unto the poor, and to give their bodies to be burned, *1 Cor.* 13. 3. And in case, when called of God, and required so to do, it is their duty.

For the young man in the Gospel, ought to have done so, as Christ advised him, that he might be perfect. And it had been good for him so to have done; for in consideration thereof, he might have had treasure in heaven, and have followed Christ, *Math.* 19. 21.

And also, *Whosoever will save his life, (when Christ calleth him to part with it) shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose it for his sake, shall finde it, Math.* 16. 24, 25, 26. and *Math.* 10. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39.

And it is lawfull for such, who are of one heart, and of one soul, to have all things common, and not to title, or claime any thing, that any of such possesseth as his own, *Acts.* 4. 32. But such, amongst such, as are possessors of Lands, may lawfully sell them, and bring the price thereof, and lay it down at the Ministers feet; that distribution may be made unto every man, (*amongst them*) according as he hath need; as *vers.* 34, 35, 37. but this community is only proper amongst such as are of one heart.

And yet for all this, He that provideth not for his own, especially them of his household, he is worse then an Infidel. And riches are given to some, as great blessings; as to *Abraham*, and *David*, and

Solomon, and Job, &c. and it is a more blessed thing to be a giver, than a receiver.

And men have a true and just proprietie in their own goods, or estates, as *Acts* 5. 4. and it is in their own power, neither ought any to be compelled to such community of goods, and estates; nor to distribute and communicate, but as they doe it freely, of their own voluntary minds without grudging, or any impulsion, as of necessity, either to the poor, or to the Ministry, as *Gal.* 6. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. and *2 Cor.* 9. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. And the Apostle moved them; not as speaking by commandement, but by reason of the forwardness of others, and the Example of Christ, who being rich, for their sakes became poor; that they through his poverty might be rich, as *Chap.* 8. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. And that supplying each others, there might be equality, as *Vers.* 14, 15. as doubtless, to such who are mutually affected, it is no more, but equal, and therefore a duty, but otherwise not, but were a sin.

3. It is lawfull for a man to beat down his body, and to bring it in subjection, by fasting, and by labour and travaile night and day, as *1 Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, &c. It is not unlawfull to fast often; yea, twice in the week, like the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*.

Yea, it is lawfull for man and wife to defraude one another, with consent, for a time; that they may give themselves unto fasting and prayer, so they come together again; That *Satan* tempt them not, for their incontinency, as *1 Cor.* 7. 5. And they that do thus, doubtless may see cause for it, why they should fast (sometimes) when they give themselves unto prayer. As first, because when the stomack is empty, the whole strength of the soul, and spirit, is set at liberty; (It not being bent and imployed in digestion of meat.) That with full bent of all the powers, and faculties, both of soul and body, they may strive and wrestle with God in prayer, and be the more faithfull and confident; and the more capable and apprehensive of spiritual understanding: for when the stomack is haultened and cloyed with meat, the strength of the spirit is necessarily engaged, for digestion of the same; and makes the mind drowsie, and dull, and the more incapable, and unfit for Communion and fellowship with God, and for the presence and power of his holy Spirit, working therein, and acting, and exercising, and enlarging the same, according to his will; making request for the

Saints,

Saints, according to the will of God, even with sighs, and groans, that cannot be expressed.

It is therefore meet, upon serious occasions, of seeking unto God, that we fast and pray, with fulness of devotion, and fervencie of spirit, if we would obtain.

And secondly, in regard that some things are not attainable; some kind of Devils not cast out, but by fasting and prayer, *Mar. 9. 19.* which clearly implies, that fasting and prayer jointly, are more powerfull and prevalent with God, then when severed, as prayer only.

And yet for all this, it was lawfull for Peter, and the rest of the Apostles to eat and drinke, &c. and who could eat, or who else could halten unto outward things, more then wise *Salomon*, who seriously concludes; *That there is nothing better for a man, then that he should eat and drinke, and he should make his soul to enjoy the fruit of his labour; and this he saw, that it was of the hand of God.*

For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, Wisdom, and Knowledge, and Joy; but to the sinner, he giveth travaile; to gather, and to heap up, that he may give to him, that is good before God, *Eccles. 2. 24, 25, 26.*

And the Lord Jesus, even Christ himselfe, as his own words do plainly declare; that contrary to the practice of *John the Baptist*, He the Son of man came eating, and drinking, eating bread, and drinking wine; insomuch that they said of him, *Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and sinners,* *Luke 7. 34.*

And the Disciples of *John* fasted often, but his Disciples fasted not whiles he was with them.

And therefore it follows; that as there is diversities of gifts, and of administrations, and operations given out by the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Even so accordingly, men are called of God, one after this manner, and another after that; and have so also their proper gifts of God, as *1 Cor. 7. 7.* And as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so he ought to walk, for so the Apostle ordained in all Churches, as *vers. 17.*

And therefore it follows, that it must not be expected, that every man should be alike absteneous from the things of this life; nor bind themselves to so strict a discipline, both over their bodies

and minds, &c. as some others, both will, and can, and ought, to doe.

4. The Apostle *Paul*, after the most strict Sect of the Jewish Religion, he lived a Pharisee; which clearly implies, that at least, there were three that were several Sects of the Jewish Religion; of which the Pharisees were the strictest; and yet they were all Religious men, and of the true Religion too: there were Scribes and Pharisees, and Saducees, and all religious and zealous also in their own wayes, and according to their own Traditions, and Doctrines; though they something differed amongst themselves: yet they were all tolerated by the Civil State; and the Civil State was not reprehended either by *John the Baptist*, or by *Christ himself*, for such toleration: but their false Doctrines, and Covetousness, and Hypocrisie, were reprov'd, and sharply too.

1. *Consequence*, And therefore it follows, That all ought not to be compell'd to engage themselves, to so strict, and holy, and severe a discipline, as ought to be tolerated, and practis'd by others who can embrace, and freely engage to endure the same, considering these grounds before named.

2. And secondly it follows, That a stricter Discipline ought to be tolerated by the Civil Magistrate; that such who please, and can freely accord, to engage themselves to the exercise thereof, (amongst themselves) may have liberty to doe it: provided they offer not to enforce their way.

Then ought to be impos'd, or made as a general, and binding Rule, or way of Government, to which all must necessarily be engag'd in, or bound unto.

Reason. For it is the *Duty* of some men, as hath been said, to bind themselves to a stricter Discipline then others need, or ought to doe. The one being qualified, through the grace of God, and fitted for it; and so manifestly engag'd and called of God, so to doe: but the other not qualified; nor so dispos'd, through the grace of God, are manifestly engag'd, and called of God, to the quite contrary, as in these foure Instances, above written.

1. Concerning Chastity or Marriage.
2. Concerning community of goods, or claiming of propriety.
3. Concerning fasting, or eating and drinking.
4. Concerning being of the strictest Sect of the true Religi-

on, such as was the Pharisees; or of one more remiss, such as was the Scribes.

But it will be demanded, how these may be applicable to the matter in hand?

I answer, that as the case stands betwixt man and man in these particulars; so it doth also betwixt Church and Church: for they are all governed by the same Law, and by the same Spirit, and the case is the same in every respect.

1. For such who make themselves chaste for the Kingdom of Heavens sake, *it is good for such not to touch a Woman*, as 1 Cor. 7. 1. And therefore they ought to be careful how they carry themselves in such respects. And it is not lawful for such to marry, if they so resolve, and know they have power over their own wills, as hath been said before.

Even so a Church being rightly constituted, and having Divine power, and authority given her, through faith in God, and the Lord Jesus Christ: And that desires to be presented, as a chaste Virgin onely unto Christ, and to be governed by him. It is not lawful, for such a Church, or at least, not good for her, to binde her selfe, to be subject to the Vote, or power and Jurisdiction of other Churches that are not constituted as a chaste Virgin onely unto Christ; and to be ruled by him, and by his Word and Spirit.

Or if they be not resolved, to be as chaste as she, and as fully subject to the Rules, and Laws, and waies of Christ, but think they ought to confocate with such, who are more loose in their Doctrine, and Government, and ways, &c. which as yet she cannot resolve to do, upon any principles she hath yet received from Christ her head.

And there is a resemblance not a little remarkable, held forth to us by the Holy Ghost, betwixt the Husband and Wife, and Christ and his Church, Ephes. 5. 22. &c. both of them, being bound to be subject alike, though yet in the Lord.

And as it is so, that there is cause of Jealousie, that some Women will not continue chaste. So there is cause of Jealousie, that some Churches will not be espoused unto one Husband: that they may be presented, as a chaste Virgin to Christ; but their minds will be corrupted from the simplicitie that is in Christ, as a Cor.

Secondly, As it is with a man, as hath been said, so it is with a Church, in the second particular: For, if a particular Church shall amongst themselves, being of one heart, and of one minde, have all things common, and none of them claime propriety of goods, as meely his own; but that they may be distributed, as every one hath need. As so it is lawful, if they can so agree, and do it freely without grudging, or repining: yet it were unlawful, and a folly, and madness, to joyn themselves so in community of goods, to such in whom they could not expect the like community, they being quit of a contrary minde, and heart, &c. like *Ananias* and *Saphirah*, covetous and hypocritical, and only sytting at carnal ends.

Thirdly, And so likewise, as it lawful for a particular man, to give themselves much unto fasting and prayer, as hath been said.

Even so it is likewise, for a particular Church, if they so agree amongst themselves, to give themselves much unto fasting and prayer, as in their apprehension, they shall think they have cause; for the good of their soules, in general or particular.

Where it may be on the contrary, some other Churches, in their apprehensions, have more cause of thankfulness; finding for the present, that the Bridegroom is with them. As so for this reason, the Disciples of Christ fasted not, whereas the Disciples of *John* fasted often.

And why then, should Churches of different judgments, in these respects, be bound by Authority, all to rejoyce, or all to mourn, and fast, and pray, at the same times, and no more frequently; but as all can agree, so to humble themselves.

And how should it chuse, but ingage men to hypocrisie, save only in case of some general judgment, of which we are certain, that all are sensible and affected with it.

And fourthly, and lastly, As it is lawful for a particular man, to be of the strictest Sect of the true Religion, such as were the Pharisees.

So it is lawful for a particular Church, to be of the strictest way, in respect of Government, Doctrine, and Discipline, that can be devised, or made good from Scripture, as lawful, &c. And the Magistrate ought not to enforce her, to conform unto any Churches, that are more remisse and loose, or careless, or not so strict, or careful, and conscientious, as they ought to be.

Though

Though I will not deny, But the Magistrate ought to tolerate; such who think they ought not to be so strict, as well as the other.

For as all good men whose general bent, is the glory of God; cannot attain such measures, or degrees of grace, and wisdom, as of faith and holiness, and of zeal, &c. one as another.

Even so all Churches, though they be true Churches, cannot possibly attain, to be so rightly constituted, and so severe, and strict, in Discipline, and Government, and Doctrine, &c. as others can, though the stricter, the better, in some respect, as I shall hereafter shew; though in some things to be over strict is a foule fault. The one conceiving, that they ought to proceed, according to the rule of charity, and the other of certainty: The one expecting, but faith Historical, in their admissions; But the other searching, for Faith Justifying, such as appears by Works, in all such whom they doe approve. As there is strong Arguments, that might easily be produced on both parties, even from sacred Scripture, that it is not easie to reconcile. I hope, they will not say, that either of them yet, have clearly demonstrated, from sacred Scriptures, their owne resolves, concerning Baptisme: I shall therefore, it may be, propose betwixt them; something of that.

But from these precedent grounds, First, it is clear, that these conclusions, will justly reprove, and, I hope, convince, both the *Independents*, and *Presbyterians*; in that they do not labour to accord, and love, and strive to live and carry as Bretheren, and communicate together in all the Ordinances, as Bretheren ought, and as occasion serves. But the one striving to enforce conformity to their wayes, and rules, and principles, &c. to which (in conscience) they, it may be, are engaged. And the other, blaming, and condemning them, as too remisse, and not so upright and conscientious, nor walking by so just and strict a rule, in constitution, government, and discipline of the Congregations, as they ought to do, and as they are resolved to engage themselves, and therefore seek for liberty so to do.

By this means they fall at variance, and fall out by the way, and about the way, though they be Bretheren, and so doe know, and acknowledge each other.

And first then, let them both consider, this falling out by the way, is not (like) as they were bretheren, for by this faith Christ,

All men shall know that ye are my Disciples; If ye love one another. Is this like love, which is the end of the Commandment, as is before proposed, even thus to bite, and devour, and destroy one another? And all because that both parties, but seeing in part, and knowing in part, and understanding in part, are of different Judgements. As so they are likely as yet to be in some thing or other, while it is so with them, as that they are not perfect, till that which is in part shall be done away.

And what then, will they never agree, till they all be perfect? will they never love, till in every particular, they be of one judgement?

But it will be objected, that men who think themselves in a right way, and others wrong; and holding forth their arguments from cleare Scripture grounds that are sufficient to convince themselves: They are apt to think that the other are obstinate, and that they see, and will not see, nor acknowledge the truth: so that they cannot chuse but be in a great measure out of charity with them: as accounting them perverted, and men that sin, being damned of their own consciences.

Ans. I answer, That if we can know for certain, after once or twice admonition, that men sinne, being damned of their own consciences, it is a foule thing. *Such ought to be rejected,* Tit. 3. 10, 11.

But such must be known to be Hereticks, and obstinate, &c. And therefore observe the nature of love in this kind, that we be not censorious, and too too injurious, in judging our bretheren in this kind. For Charity, (saith the Apostle) *suffereth long, and is kind: Charity envieth not, nor vaunteth not it self, nor is it puffed up: doth not behave it self unseemly; seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, &c.* 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6, 7.

And seeing that all these are natural properties of that love which is the end of the Commandment: Let us try our selves by all these properties, whether we have behaved, and carried our selves accordingly towards such, before we censure, and let our hearts loose, to reject and oppose, and deal with them as enemies of God. We ought not to hate, nor to deal with such as enemies at all: but to love, and pity, and pray for them; and acknowledge them bre-
thren

thren, and admonish them as brethren, though they seem to walk disorderly, and obey not the Word even of God himselfe in some things, 2 *Thess.* 3. 14, 15. and *Mar.* 5. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48.

Though I doe confesse, that if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, he ought to be held even in execration, if it manifestly appear. And we ought to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints, *Jud.* 3. And we should stand fast to our Christian liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be entangled again with yokes of bondage; nor suffer men to Rule over us at their pleasure, according to their own fancies, or arbitrary wills, not submitted to the Laws of God; nor holding to the head, and to the foundation, &c. *Coloss.* 1. 18. and *Chap.* 2. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, &c.

But still always, with due respect to their persons; as pittying their ignorance, weakness, infirmities, failings, and imperfections that we discover in them. As considering our selves, lest we also be tempted, and that we also have been in like condition, in one particular respect or another; having been erroneous, and misapprehensive, and offensive unto others, in such respects: for who that lives; but if he will examine, he may remember that he hath erred from the truth, in some thing or other: and been reduced and convinced by others; or by searching of the Scriptures have seen our selves (as of our selves) subject to all, or to any error. And that we ought to acknowledge, that it is of grace, and the gift of God; that we are sufficient, or able to know or understand any thing of the things of God. And why then should we be high minded, and not rather fear, lest we also fall, or fail, &c. of the grace of God? Or why then should we be too confident; either that we do not; or that we cannot err?

And if we do not expect, that men should think so of us, why are we so angry, that all men are not just on our minds? and that they will not follow us, nor conformance unto us, just in our wayes?

Doth it not Imply, that we think of our selves above that which is meet? to wit, that we cannot erre, and expect that others should thinke so likewise. And what is this lesse then the Pope, that *Antichrist*, and the Church of *Rome* challenge to themselves; and by reason thereof exalt themselves above the Magistrates, above all that is called God; or that is worshipped? &c.

Whereas on the contrary part, it is manifest, that the generality of the whole Christian world, hath erred exceedingly: Was it not once said, That the whole World was become an *Arrian*? Nay, were not all the opposers of the *Arrian* Heresie, in an error likewise, both one and another? to wit, those that maintained, That the Trinity of Persons was one substance. For though the *Trinity of Persons be one and the same in Essence, yet they are not one substance*, for the blessed Deity is all Essence, as the Scripture is clear, *Exod. 3. 14.*

I Am that I am: to wit, that *He [Is,] is all Essence.*

But no proof can be made from Scripture ground; that the invisible God is any substance at all, but an Infinite Essence, and not locally circumscribable, as all substance is: but unlimitably existent; filling both all place, and every substance, both in heaven and earth, and infinitely beyond them on every side: circumventing all things, and filling all things, even from the very top of the highest heavens, to the middle, and bowels or center of the earth: and yet he himself is not circumvented, with any thing at all; no, not with [place] it self: in which, as Philosophers speak, *All things stand*: But is Infinite and unlimitable, without circumference, and without center; the heavens of heavens are not able to contain him, but he filleth all things: as the Scripture is clear, and as might evidently and convincingly also be made to appear to any rational man, by Reasons and Arguments, drawn from the motion and government of all things, and constant course, and subsistence of the heavens, and of the earth, and waters, and all visible creatures: for who else is the efficient cause of their being, and subsistence, and of their motion, &c. Look *Rom. 1. 18, 19, 20, 21.* and *Psal. 19. 1, &c.*

But if all may erre, and every one hath erred; and it may be doth erre in some thing or other: Then all and every particular man, ought so fear himself, lest he also do erre, and that in such particulars, wherein he thinketh, that he justly opposeth, and condemneth others: And ought so search the Scriptures, and to search the meaning of the Spirit, even in the Scripture it self: and so be sure of that, before he be too confident, and furious in opposition, on judging of others, as Hereticks, &c.

He that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. He that thinketh he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

know, faith the Spirit of God. Then we ought therefore to put on Charity, which is the bond of perfectness: and not to break off Love, but upon sure grounds, that they are enemies of God, whom we so judge, and censure, &c.

But for more punctuall application of these precedent conclusions unto both Parties, to wit, to the *Independents* and *Presbyterians*, I shall briefly assert these cleare consequences from the aforesaid grounds: first to the one, and then to the other.

And first then, to the *Presbyterians* I assert as followeth, in behalf of the *Independents*.

1. That it is lawfull yea and the bounden duty of some men, to binde themselves to a stricter discipline, then others need or ought to do: The one being qualified, through the grace of God, and fitted for it, and so manifestly engaged, and called of God so to do, for the time present, whiles they think they ought.

2. To the *Independents*, that the *Presbyterians* not being so qualified, or disposed, or called, through the grace of God; but manifestly engaged, to the quite contrary; And as is it were bound in spirit, within their own sphere, or place, or calling, or way, &c. ought so to continue, whiles they think they ought; till they be convinced from Scripture grounds that it is their duty; and that they are called of God, to a stricter Rule, and way of Discipline, then they yet do practise; or can freely embrace, or engage to indure, as witness the foure precedent examples.

Consequ. And therefore it followes, That a stricter Discipline ought to be tolerated, by the Civil State; that such who please, and can freely accord, to engage themselves to the exercise thereof amongst themselves, may have liberty to do it: provided alwaies, that they do not offer to inforce others unto their way: but only the freedom, and liberty of themselves, and of their own, &c. then ought to be imposed, and made as a general, and binding rule, and way of Government; to which all must necessarily be engaged in, or bound unto: as hath been said before.

Objett. But it will be Objected, seeing I propose this Assertion to the *Presbyterians*, in behalf of *Independents*; that it will be necessary, that I shew wherein the *Independents* rules, and ways of discipline, are stricter then theirs; for they are generally accounted, by the *Presbyterians*, more remiss and loose in many respects;

giving way for libertie of all Religions, without controule by the Civil State, as so they speak of them.

Answer. I answer that their rules and principles, according to which they engage to act, are manifestly stricter, and lawfully too, in divers particulars, wherein I shall briefly instance: And wherein I thinke they are likewise engaged, in duty and conscience so to do, though I will not deny, but many *Presbyterians* are engaged in conscience, to do the contrary, and are fully perswaded, that they ought so to do for the time present.

1. And first, they are stricter with whom they incorporate, and joyn themselves in Church policy: And so far forth, as any particular Church is politically joyned, for the government thereof, and for the good of the body in every respect. A Church can never be too strict, but the stricter the better: and the more likely it is, to be well ordered and governed, and buile both in faith and love, and all other graces and vertues whatsoever; that may tend for the benefit and good of the whole.

And therefore, their principles are to admit none to be incorporated with them, but men of approved fidelity: Because according to their principles, they having liberty, and power in all Church affaires, that are of joynt concernment, and that respect them all, as in Elections, or Ejections, Admissions, or deprivations, Receptions, or Rejections; Receiving in, or casting out, from amongst themselves, they all having interest, as members of the body, have liberty, and power, for vote, or suffrage, as they are bound in conscience, and can see just cause, and render a reason of their faith, hope, or desires therein; grounded upon Scripture evidence, as so they ought to have. They, I say, according to their principles, having this power and liberty, &c. are bound to be strict, with whom they incorporate and joyn themselves: Left by sway of vote, things should be carryed Antichristian-wise, to the dishonour of God, and of the Church, &c. by male administration of all the Ordinances that concern them all, to be carefull of in the sight of God.

For if men be admitted to have vote in Election of Ministers, and Elders, and Deacons, &c. that are not approved, for fidelity and firmness, to discern, in some good measure, whether they be men of good and honest report, and full of the holy Ghost, and of wisdom, suitable for such a place; they may cause the Election and Approbation.

bation of such as will defile the Church with corrupt doctrine, and unsound principles; and ways, and manners, to their own destruction.

And therefore all that are accounted to be truly religious, are not fit to be incorporated, as members of the body, to have liberty and power in such respects, till they come to ripeness and maturity of judgment in spiritual respects: In like case, as the *Levites*, though they all were given as a gift unto *Aaron* and to his sons, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, yet they were not to administer and wait on the service of the Tabernacle; but from twenty and five years old, and upwards: And from the age of fifty years they were to cease waiting on the service thereof, and should serve no more, as *Numb.* 8. 24, 25, 26. Clearly implying, That only in case of ripeness of judgment, and ableness, and fitness, for such a business, they ought to be used, and admitted; &c. but not otherwise, lest they spoyle the Government, or Discipline, and Service, that belongs unto them: However, notwithstanding, all that are accounted to be truly religious, ought to be admitted unto all the Ordinances, yea, even to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, though never so weak in understanding and knowledge, as all the *Levites*, even during their minority; yet *Aaron* was appointed to bring them with him, for they might be present, though they did no service: And though they might not administer, and do the service of the Tabernacle, yet they might be admitted to come neer with the rest, and to offer for themselves, though not for others, as the rest of the Priests, as *Numb.* 18. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. & Chap. 16. 45. So that whatsoever concerned but themselves onely, they might come neer, and approach to do it; (whereas no stranger might intermeddle) though they might do no service that concerned the Tabernacle, till they came to years: But of this more fully in another place.

2. And secondly, As they are stricter with whom they do incorporate, and joyn themselves, for these respects:

Even so, for the same ends and respects, they are very strict and conscientious, and ought so to be, that all that are found, and known to be men of approved fidelity, should thus incorporate and joyn themselves; I say, their principles are, that all ought so to do, that live not too remote, but within convenient bounds, and in convenient numbers, for frequent assembling of themselves together: and:

to engage themselves in Covenant unto God; in these respects, and unto all brotherly and Christian duties, for better security, and deeper engagement, both to God and men, not to deal unfaithfully in all such business, as concerns them all, but without partiality, or respect of persons, as before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels.

And all the account will be little enough, in things that concern the good of their souls, and the souls of posterities, that may yet succeed, to the end of the world; for whom they ought to provide, and be careful for, that the Gospel of peace, and of glad tidings, and all the Ordinances, might be preached and administered, when they are gone in power and purity, as well as to themselves: And to beware of dogs, and evil workers, and wolves, &c. and as much as possible, to keep them out, least ungodly men, being crept in, should turn the grace of God into wantonness, &c. And this Gospel of peace, being a pearl so invaluable, as it were easy to shew, in every respect, can never be guarded with too great security, or deep engagement, nor too strictly kept from being soyled or defiled, with the hands of men.

And though it be true, that the men of this world are wiser in their generations, (and for conservation of their own liberties, privileges, pearls and estates, and to confirm and secure them, even to their posterities after them, if possible for ever,) then the Children of light, as *Luk. 16.8. Mat. 7.24, 25.* And may justly also rise up in judgment, and condemn our folly and carelessness herein: Yet no man will say but that the children of light ought to be as wise in their generations, and in their precious things, and in the things of God, and that concern their souls, for so we ought, even *to be wise as servants, though innocent as Doves.*

And therefore to incorporate such as stand approved, and are men of fidelity, within convenient bounds, is doubtless the duty of all, and every such, in times of liberty, for publique administration of the Ordinances of God, and for Government and Discipline: And in times of persecution, at the least privately, they ought so to do, without being restrained by the civil State, and limited, and kept within parochial bonds, against their Christian liberties, and duties also, both to God, and men.

3. And thirdly, The principles of Independents are stricter and nearer to the Scripture rules for edifying of the Church; They do
not

not limit the holy one of Israel to speak in public by the learned only: For first, as the Apostle saith, *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.* 1 Cor. 14. 7.

Assertion. From whence it naturally and manifestly flows, That to whomsoever the manifestation of the Spirit is given, it is given to such to profit withal.

It is objected, That the manifestations of the Spirit are not so evident and perspicuous in these days, as in the primitive times; and the witnessing thereto by miracles is ceased, and therefore we may easily be deceived; especially such who are unlearned and unstable, are easily deceived.

Ans. 1. I answer first, Whether any now adays hath the manifestations of the Spirit, yea, or no; yet this assertion is true, for it doth not assert either,

Ans. 2. Secondly, I answer, That if the manifestations of the Spirit be not evident and demonstrable in these days, how can even the learned Ministers preach as they ought, and as the Apostles did, in the clear evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, *Thus so many faith might not need to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* 1 Cor. 2. 4. 5.

Ans. 3. Thirdly, Though for want of the witnessing therunto by miracles, those who are carnal and do not believe, cannot discern the manifestations of the Spirit, and the power of God, whereby men speak, as Vers. 8, 14.

Yet for all that, they may speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yea, even the wisdom of God is a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God hath ordained before the world unto their glory; and those secret mysteries, which eye hath not seen, neither ear heard, &c. which God hath prepared for them that love him, he doth reveal unto such by his Spirit, Vers. 6, 7, 8, 10 16.

Consequence. Such therefore, though they be unlearned in the Tongue, (I mean) who having received the Spirit of God, are thereby spiritualiz'd, may discern all things, as Vers. 10, 15. *yea, even the deep things of God.* Therefore it follows, That the manifestations of the Spirit may be evident and demonstrable, even now in these days, to such who are spiritualiz'd through faith in God, though not to the carnal or worldly &c. who do account these spiritual things foolishness, as Vers. 14. and wanting.

wanting an eye of Faith, cannot discern them; because they are invisible: For as the light of the body is the eye, Matth. 6. 22, 23. so the light of the Soul, whereby, and where-through it understandeth, or discerneth spiritual and invisible things, is the eye of Faith. For as God himself being invisible, is only seen, or comprehended, and known through Faith: so are also the things of God, undiscernable without Faith, Heb. 11.

Quest. 1. But in what particular gifts, or qualifications, or administrations, or operations, are the manifestations of the Spirit of God, and of power, evident and demonstrable in any that are not learned in the tongues, now in these days?

Ans. I answer, that many of those, yea, and the chief of all those, that are reckoned up by the Apostle, and are by him asserted, as manifestations of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 12. 8, 9, 10. and Chap. 13. 3. are doubtless, evident, and demonstrable in some unlearned in the tongues, even in these days.

As 1. The word of Wisdom. 2. The word of Knowledge. 3. Faith. 4. Prophesying; to wit, in speaking unto men, to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, which is the chief of all. 5. Discerning of Spirits. 6. Interpretation of Scriptures, that are dark and mysterious; and generally not understood.

Quest. 2. But may not some men, by means of good Education, attain to a great measure of Wisdom and knowledge, even in spiritual things: and so to the word of wisdom, and of knowledge, and to speak unto men to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort; and yet not have the Spirit of God, nor his power evidently demonstrable, as is asserted?

Ans. I answer, No: For the natural man perceiveth not the things of God, neither [can] he know them, saith the Apostle, because they are spiritually discerned. And therefore he neither can know them, nor speak of them feelingly, and apprehensively: but only Theoretically; according to the largeness and capacity of his memory: as he hath learned, and is grounded in the principles of Religion, and of Faith, and Doctrine; as it were in a Catechetical child-like manner; who can keep to the words, but know not the sense; And doe by Art of memory, speak in the same words, and phrases, and manner, and form of doctrine with others. But as for feeling apprehension, and spiritual understanding, and knowledge [indeed,] of what they speak; they are utterly incapable,

whiles

whiles they want faith. And this is easie to discern, by their coldness on the one hand, or their zeal on the other, in delivery thereof: And by their Emphatical, or loose and light expressions, and arguments, and motives, and means, &c. It is easie to discern, whether a man speak in spirit, that is to say, whether it come from the heart, and affection; or but from the brain only. Neither is it easie to counterfeit *heartly affection*, but it may easily be discern'd, that it is but forc'd. A very Idiot may, by strength of memory, speak the bare words of a Sermon, and rattle them over; but he cannot keep to the distinct sense of every period, according to the proper intended Emphasis, or meaning thereof; but may by improper periods and interpretations, make the sense seem quite contrary to what it is indeed: but a man that understands it, and is apprehensively affected, according to it, can expresse it suitable to the true intent and meaning thereof.

Even just so it is, betwixt men that are spiritual, through faith in God; and such as are carnal in all their expressions, concerning spirituall things.

Obj. But though it be difficult, and hard to counterfeit, yet it may be done; so as few, or none, can discern, but they are as spiritual and as sound as others.

Qu. What notes therefore is there to prove, for certain; and that will evidence, and demonstrate indeed, that it is the spirit of God, that speaks in such, miracles excepted?

Ans. There is many notes, by which men may be known, to speak in the Spirit, and by the Spirit of God. But some are more certain and infallible then others. I shall therefore instance, in some of the most certain: And those that on purpose are given out, by the Spirit of God, as evident demonstrations, of the same Spirit, and of power, &c.

1. And first, That note given out by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, is an evident demonstration, that men are sent of God, and come not of themselves; to wit, seeking his glory, (if that do appeare) For saith Christ, *He that commeth of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousnesse is in him,* Joh. 7. 18. Their zeal therefore for the glory of God, and self-denial, is a manifestation of the Spirit of God.

2. That, *Joh. 10. 10. The Thief commeth not, but for to steal,*

steeds, and to kill, and to destroy. But the good shepherd seeketh that they might have life, and have it more abundantly, to wit, spiritual life; so that a desire will appear in the good shepherds; that the sheep of Christ might have *A spiritual life, through faith, and that they might be edified and built up further in the same faith, even from strength to strength.* And rather then take of this their ends, they will not stick to lay down, even their lives for the good of their sheep, as ver. 11. But will continue to build them up further in faith, and love, which are in Christ Jesus: as ver. 28.

3. The wisdom which is from above, is first, pure; not dark, and confused, darkning the counsell with words without knowledge, but *pure words*, Psalm. 11. 6. 2. It is peaceable; not wrangling, and froward, angry, and contentious. 3. It is gentle and meeke; not sowre, and proud, and harsh, and furious. 4. It is easie to be intreated; not self-willed, and obstinate, obdurate and implacable, but ingenious, and tractable. 5. It is full of mercy, and good fruits, both in word and deed: and not cruel, and unmerciful, pitiless, and careless of doing good; neither to the just, nor unjust. Look *James*. 19. 18.

4. It is the property of the holy Ghost, when he cometh, or by whomsoever he speaketh, *To convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement*, Joh. 16. 8.

5. And to lighten things that are hid in darkness: and make the counsells of the hearts manifest; as 1 Cor. 4. 5. and Chap. 14. 24, 25. The first, by a clear unfolding, and interpreting of sacred Scriptures, that are dark, unto others, and not formerly opened: and this of all other, is the most manifest evidence of the Spirit of God. And secondly, a speaking to the heart, and to the souls and consciences of men; discovering their very thoughts, and counsells: And approving themselves, to every mans conscience in the sight of God.

6. Their coming to the light that their deeds might be made manifest, that they are wrought in God, is a cleare evidence, that they do truth, as *John*. 3. 21. their end appearing to be such, that they meane no falshood.

7. Their shining forth as lights in the world; and holding forth the word of life, Phil. 2. 15. 16. Yea, even the faithful word, that cannot be reproved: and making it manifest; as they ought

ought to do : for therefore they are called, the light of the world : *Matth. 5. 14.* For all things that are reprov'd, are made manifest by the light : for what saithen dark make manifest, is light, *Ephes. 5. 13, 14.*

But the chief of all these particulars, is a cleare understanding, and knowledge of God, and of the sacred Scriptures, and of the secrets and mysteries of the Kingdom of God : for without all controvertise, *Great is the mystery of godliness,* as the Apostle saith, *Coloss. 1. 26, 27, 28. Rom. 16. 25. Ephes. 3. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 10. Tit. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 20.*

Reas. For to them that are without, and unbelieving, all things (saith Christ) are done in Parables, *Luke 8. 10. and Mar. 4. 33, 34. Matth. 13. 11, 12, 13, 18.*

How much more then are the secret mysteries of God, and of Christ, and of our spirituall union, and communion with him (which is onely spiritual, through faith and love) Parables and Mysteries unto all such, who have no knowledge of God at all ; but only as they have heard of him, by the hearing of the ear ; or barely Theoretical, without an eye of Faith.

Conseq. Therefore it follows ; that he that speaketh understandingly, and apprehensively of these secret Mysteries ; doth evidently demonstrate, that he speaketh by the Spirit, through the power and grace of the Spirit of God ; who onely revealeth, and giveth understanding of the things of God ; as hath been said : so that it is manifest, that it is not they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father that speaketh in them. And by how much more they shall lighten things, that are hid in darkness ; and make the counsels of the hearts manifest, as *1 Cor. 4. 5.* by the cleare unfolding, or interpretation of sacred Scripture, and of the secrets thereof ; especially such as are dark and mystical, and hid from others ; or that have not formerly been explained, and opened ; or not convincingly, as a cleer result, producing an infallible assent.

By so much the more evident, and demonstrable it is ; that it is not they that speak ; but the Spirit of their Father that speaketh in them, *Matth. 10. 19, 20.* Yea, that they are sent to speak, or to declare those things, being thrust forth, even by the Spirit of Christ, who dwelleth in them, and being Lord of the harvest thrusteth forth Labourers into his Harvest. For how is it possible, that things that are hid from the wise and learned, should be revealed

led even unto babes, and to the foolish, &c. (in respect with this world,) if they were not inspired; and revealed unto them by the Spirit of God, seeing they have not learned them by humane documents, but from God only.

Objct. But it will be objected, That it were immodesty, yea presumption, and a token of spiritual pride in men, if they should so much as acknowledg, much less affirm, that they are taught of God, and that immediatly, by the inspiration of his blessed Spirit; and that it is not they that speak, but the Spirit of their Father that speaketh in them: But especially for unlearned men, that are but as babes, compared with the wise and learned, it were a shameful thing in them to do it, above all compare.

Ans. I answer, If they understand and know such things as have been said, even the secrets and mysteries of the Kingdom of God, which they have not learned, nor bin taught of men.

To whom then should they ascribe the glory? Ought they to ascribe it to their own wisdom? Dare the learned ascribe their spiritual understanding, and knowledge of God, and of the things of God, either to their own wisdom, or their learnedness in the Tongues, which a carnal man may attain unto, that can know nothing of the things of God, as hath been said?

Were this to give God the glory, and to do it as of the ability that God administreth, that in all things God might be glorified? Were this to speak as the Oracle of God, and in his name? 1 Pet. 4. 11.

Might not such justly expect the judgment of Herod, to be struck with an Angel of the Lord, and to be eaten up of worms, because they give not the glory unto God of what they do or speak, in his sacred name, that is good, or excellent, and true &c.

And it is doubtful, at least, that such who utterly exclude all that are not learned in the tongues, I mean, from speaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, or from any ministration in the name of God in publique, especially that they thereby intimate, that their abilities for spiritual ministration are onely attained through learnedness in the Tongues; for how else durst they be so bold, as to limit the holy one of Israel, that he shall not speak but by the learned onely?

Objct. But it will be objected, That speaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, is not properly to pro-

prophecy; for prophesying is properly foreshewing of things to come, though such who prophecy, do ordinarily also speak unto men to edification, &c. as well as prophecy of things to come.

Auf. 1. I answer, first, That they that edifie the Church, build them up in Faith; and Faith is of things invisible, and chiefly of things to come; For *Faith is the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11. 1.* And therefore edifying, or building men up further in the true faith, and giving them better evidences and grounds of things hoped for from sacred testimonies, is, of all other, the chiefest prophesying, and most useful, powerful, and comfortable, for giving life to the souls of men, both in this life, and in the life to come. Spiritual life I mean, even joy and comfort unspeakable and full of glory, See *Job. 10. 10, 18.* and *1 Job. 5. 11, 12, 13.* Yea, for perfecting of the Saints, as *Eph. 4. 11. to 16.*

2. And as for the other, as of foreshewing new things to come, as *Agabus* prophecyed of the dearth and famine over all the world.

Though it be a part of prophesying not so ordinarily attainable, and more difficult in these days, yet it is not so needful nor useful as the other: And though it be a more certain and evident demonstration of the sacred Spirit inspired into such, when the thing is accomplished and come to pass; yet that part of prophesying which the Apostle commends as the chief of all, to wit, speaking unto men to edification, &c. is both far more profitable, and a clearer evidence (for the time present) of the Spirit of God, then the other is. And

Therefore I say, first, it is the most present evidence, and most immediate demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, because foreshewing of things to come is no present and immediate evidence of it self, till the things be come to pass that are in truth foreshewed; though it is true, that foreshewing of things to come, is the very complement and perfection of prophesying, and the most visible demonstration of the Spirit of God, as *Deut. 18. 22.* and *Job. 16. 13.* when the things are accomplished.

2. But, secondly, yet this prophesying intended by the Apostle, is the most useful, and the most profitable of all other gifts, for the edifying of the Church: And therefore saith the Apostle, *Fol-*

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low after Charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but chiefly that ye may prophecy, 1 Cor. 14. 1. And the reason is rendered Ver. 2. because He that prophesyeth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort: which is the chief end of all gifts. For all that are zealous of spiritual gifts, should seek that they might excel to the edifying of the Church, as Ver. 12. Although the gift of tongues, and so also foreshewing of things to come, is a more evident demonstration to convince them that beleeve not, as Ver. 22. yet look the end of all gifts, as 1 Cor. 14. 12. Ephes. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. for [that] should be our end. But prophesying, saith the Apostle, serveth not for them that beleeve not, but for them that beleeve, Ver. 22. And therefore is of greater and more profitable use for the edifying of the Church. But wherefore, or wherein is it more useful? The Apostle answers, and brings it in as a reason, to wit, For he that prophesyeth, speaketh unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort.

Consequ. And therefore it follows, That speaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort, is of all other gifts the most useful, and most to be desired and sought after, and to be most esteemed, and accounted of by the Church of God: And so are all such who have that gift, and do not hide it in a napkin, but use it accordingly for the same end for which it is given, whiles they keep unto sound doctrine that cannot be reproved; and speak but according to the Law and Testimony, and seek but onely and chiefly his glory that sent them; and that they might excel to the edifying of the Church, and to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: And if they contend earnestly, if it be but for the faith that was once delivered to the Saints; or do but stand fast to the Christian Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and that they might not be entangled with yokes of bondage, nor be as men pleasers or servants of men, after they are bought with a price, provided they preach nor seek any liberty at all to do any evil, either in word or deed; nor to be contentious and disobedient to the Truth of God; I say of such, they are sent of God: And who-soever refuseth, resisteth, disparageth, disgraceth, or despiseth such, doth even the same to him that sent them: And such, of all others, ought to be honored, even with double honor, that both rule well, and also labor in the word and doctrine by speak-
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ing unto men to edification, and reprobation, and comfort, as hath been said.

And therefore all that are in authority ought to give liberty to all them whose spirit God hath raised to build up the Churches in their most holy Faith, lest wrath be upon them from the Lord, as *Ezra* 1. 5. 6. and *Chap.* 7. 13, 16, 17. and *Chap.* 8. 22, 23. and *Psa.* 2.

It is therefore a matter of dangerous consequence, either to act, or to much as seem to act, or comply with such, who doe exclude all from any spiritual ministrations, in the name of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, yea even in publique, (I mean) that are not learned in the Tongues; for they exclude, it may be, such as *Peter* and *John* and all the Church which was at *Jerusalem*, who were all scattered abroad, and went every where preaching the word. See *Acts* 8. 1, 4. *Psa.* 2. throughout. And the *Apostle* speaking to the *Hebrews*, tells them, That when for the time they ought to have been [Teachers,] yet they had need to learn, &c. *Heb.* 5. 12.

1 *Reas.* For what is it else, but to limit the Holy one of Israel, that he shall not speak, but by the learned onely, either in private or publique?

Who hath told us plainly, That he hideth things from the wise and learned, that he revealeth unto babes, *Luk.* 10.

2. *Reas.* And what is it else, but clearly to oppose the *Apostles* rules, given out for direction in such cases, to wit,

1. As every man hath received the gift, so let him administer the same, as good disposers of the manifold grace of God.

And 2. Let every man administer according to the measure or proportion of his Faith.

3. And how dangerous is it to advise, much less to compel any man to hide his talent in a napkin, and not to suffer him to occupy with it for his masters advantage. least it be taken from him? yea, though it be that [man] that hath but one poor Talent, who doubtles ought to put it forth in his place and calling, as well as those that have five or more, see *Heb.* 10. 22, to 26, &c. *Heb.* 5. 12, to 15, &c.

4. And how shall those things be made known to the Church that are on purpose hid from the wise and learned, and onely revealed unto babes, &c. if we cannot be content to learn them

at babes, as good old *Eli* both did, and was glad to do, at the child *Samuel* ? And hath not God on purpose done it ; And chosen the base and foolish things of this world, to confound the Wise and the mighty, &c. as 1 Cor. 1. 2, 27, 28. 29. and Chap. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14 on purpose I say.

Yea, that no flesh should rejoyce in his presence, but that he that glorieth, might glory in the Lord.

Was not the word of the Lord, revealed unto the Childe *Samuel*, rather then to good old *Eli* : And did not *Eldad* and *Medad* prophesie in the Camp, as well as the rest, and as lawfully too; the Spirit of the Lord coming upon them : did *Moses* forbid them till he had blessed them ; or till their callings of God should be evidenced by miracles ; as *Moses* was, and as some do expect ; or they will not heare an unlearned man ; see *John* 11. 9, 10, 11. *John* did no miracle, though all men held *John* as a Prophet. Or shall we charge them with immodestie, for offering to preach, without Ordination ?

Was no Prophet accounted a Prophet, but that wrought miracles, or was ordained by men : and learned in the tongues ? Look *Joh. 10. 41.*

Was not *Amos* an Herdman, and a gatherer of Sacamore fruit ; when the Lord took him, and sent him to prophesie ? And do not his words good, to them that walk uprightly, by whomsoever he sendeth them ?

Is it not lawful for the Lord *Jesus Christ*, to thrust forth labourers into his harvest ; without Licence from the learned in the tongues ?

Or doe not they that refuse, whomsoever he sendeth, refuse him ? Or is it lawful to forbid any, whom he sendeth ; to preach unto men, that they might be saved ? Like the wicked Jewes, the salvation of souls being their chief end, as the drift of their doctrine will easily shew.

Is it not lawfull, for them that know the terror of the Lord, to perswade men ? And should not every man administer according to the measure of his faith ; and be as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God ; as hath been said, without licence, from the learned in the tongues ?

And must they but only be suffered, to administer according to the measure, and degrees of their learnedness, and knowledge in the tongues meereely ?

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Have none the manifestation of the Spirit, but the learned in the tongues?

Or dare we cross the Apostle, and say, that the manifestation of the Spirit, is not given to every man, to profit withal?

On that the chief grace and gift of the Spirit, and that which is most profitable, and usefull to the Church for Edification; and therefore most chiefly to be desired, is [not] that men might prophesie?

Or what is this prophesying, that is so much to be desired above all other gifts; yea, above the gift of tongues? Is it not speaking unto men to Edification, and Exhortation, and comfort? 1 Cor. 14. 1, 3. Is it not preferred before the gift of tongues? How much more then is it to be preferred before [Learnedness] in the tongues; which is onely taught by humane Document; and is not given as a manifestation of the Spirit: but is that which a carnal man, that knoweth nothing, neither can know any thing, concerning spiritual things, may attain unto, 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Therefore learnedness in the tongues, being no manifestation of the Spirit at all, is therefore no signe, that men are called of God, and sent to preach.

But he that hath prophesie, let him prophesie according to the proportion of faith.

But who is this [He] that hath prophesie, in the Apostles sence in this place?

But he that speaketh unto men; to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort.

And yet further by way of Directory, he giveth forth a most exact Rule, to wit:

Quest. But how, and what order must be used?

Answer. Let the Prophets speak, two or three, and let the rest judge. And if any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

Quest. But why so?

Answer. For ye may all speak, one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted, 1 Cor. 14. 29, 30, 31.

Quest. But where, and when, and in what company must this be, that the Prophets may all speak one by one?

Answer. When the whole Church of the Corinthians was come together, 22. vers. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

And therefore also, when any whole Church, rightly constituted, as the *Corinthians* was, are come together, they may do the like.

Quest. But were not this immodesty, in these dayes, when the whole Church is come together in some place, and every one hath a Psalm, hath Doctrine, hath a Tongue, hath Revelation, hath an Interpretation; That all these one by one, should be communicated for the good of the whole, as *vers.* 26, 27, 31, 32. all that are Prophets I meane, for so is the Directory? *vers.* 29. 24.

Ans. Was this the practise of the Churches in the Primitive times, by the Apostles direction? Might all that were zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that they might excell, to the Edifying of the Church? as *vers.* 12.

And must it therefore now, be accounted immodesty, because it is not the custome in our Churches, before these times?

Yea, must it be accounted immodesty, to use the same liberty in those Churches; which are of purpose so constituted; that the gifts of al that are so qualified, may be most useful and profitable unto all: that all might learne, and all might be comforted, and all might be edified; as *vers.* 30, 31. And might grow in grace from faith to faith, and from strength to strength, till they come to be tall men and women, in Jesus Christ: as *Psal.* 84. 7. Ten, that holding the Head, from which all the body by joynts and bands, having nourishment, ministred and knit together, might the more increase, with the increase of God? as *Coloss.* 2. 19. and *Chap.* 3. 12, 13. to 18.

And why should any member of the mysticall body of Jesus Christ, be therefore despised as uselesse, and unprofitable, because unlearned in the tongues?

Hath not God himself, on purpose, so provided and tempered the body together, and given more honour to that part which lacked: that there might be no Schisme in the body; but that the members might learn, to have the same care one of another: Seeing the head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you: as *Chap.* 12. 13. &c. to the end. Proposing the uselesse, and propriety and necessity of every member of our natural bodies to be as patterns unto bodies spiritual: that all the members, in their severall places, might be accounted of, encouraged, honoured, comforted, edified, and esteemed of, as they ought to be, necessary and useful for the good of the whole; shewing that the most feeble

feeble members ought not to be despised, but, as much as in us lieth, honored and clothed with more abundant comeliness: And every one called forth, employed, desired, and deputed (by such who can discern their proper gifts, or strengths and abilities; for the necessary use and good of the whole, or of any other parts or members of the body) to such employments as they are fittest for: And this calling and deputation would take away all appearance or suspicion of immodesty in any such members, to what ever employment they are called unto.

But while it is otherwise, and that the very constitution of our *Presbyterian Churches* require, that none be admitted, but that is so and so learned (and that enters in by the learned's door) It were immodesty to observe the *Apostles rules* in such *Presbyterian Churches*. And it is no marvel if such who do it (yea though in other Churches) be accounted silly fellows, and rub-preachers by the rude people, who it may be account them, as they did *Paul* and others, no better then mad, as *Verf. 23*. For they are so accounted, and spoken of too, and that by our grave Divines, so reverently they esteem of the gifts of God, and of the graces of his Spirit, which are the more perspicuous, by how much more they are unlearned in the Tongues.

And therefore it is no marvel if it be so unto them all, as is spoken in these Scriptures, *Isa. 29*. from the *9*. to the end, *Micah 3. 5, 6, 7, 8*. *Hosea 8. 12*. Let them look to it that despise prophesying, that resist the Spirit; yea, that like *Jannes* and *Jambres* resist the Truth, and that despise but the least of those little ones that believe in Christ; for they do despise, and resist him and his sacred Truth.

And it is to be feared, that many are guilty even of speaking [words] against the holy Ghost; A dangerous sin (as it needs must be) *that shall never be forgiven either in this life, or in the life to come*, as *Mat. 12. 30, 31, 32*.

It is no marvel, if such Ministers, yea though the chiefest of all on the face of the earth, have no manifest Vision, as once it was in the days of *Eli*, when they caused the people to despise the offering of the Lord; even so I mean, they cause the people to despise such service, and offerings, and sacrifice, as God now requires, as *Rom. 12. 11*. *Rev. 1. 6*. *1 Pet. 2. 7, 8, 9, 10*. For they that despise these things, despise not men, but God.

It is no marvel, if they must be content either to learn it at babes, or to be without, and dye without knowledge, as 1 Sam. 3. 1, 17, 18. *Hos.* 4. 5, 6.

Object. But it will be objected, That the like ways for edifying of the Church in these days, that were practised in the Apostles times, are not suitable now, because that those extraordinary gifts are ceased.

Ans. 1. I answer, That the chief and most profitable of all those gifts, for edifying of the Church, is still on foot, to wit, *Prophecyng, speaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort*, as hath been said, 1 Cor. 14. 1, 2, 3.

Secondly, I answer, That the same Spirit worketh also now, in them that beleeve, and is as full of power, and as willing also to edifie the Church, for it is not changeable: And what know we, but some now adays are full of matter? *the spirit within them constraining them to speak*; Job 32. 18, to 23. So it was with *Elisha*, who had not another, but even the self-same spirit; who divideth to every man severally as he will: And so it was with *David*, and *Paul*, and *Jeremiah*, and others, as a fire within them.

But it is to be feared, at least, if not a thing obvious and manifest, that there is some, even now adays, as in the days of old, that shut the doors of the Kingdom of God, and neither enter in themselves, nor suffer them that would, as Christ himself told them. Yea, Light is wanting, and Vision faileth them, and they walk in darkness, and yet despise the help of any new lights, though many old lights (that are publique and clear, and manifest unto others, and that of old likewise,) would be new lights unto them, if they could discover them, 1 Joh. 3. 10, 11. But they are in darkness, and walk in darkness, and know not whither they go; nor what they speak, nor whereof they affirm, *But even speak evil of the things they know not*, 2 Pet. 2. 12.

And yet, for all that, would be accounted, and expect to be followed, and obeyed of all, as if they were omniscient, like God himself, and could not possibly err, Ver. 10. But all have not the knowledge of God; this may be spoken to all our shame: Else they would know, that he that thinketh he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

Object. But there is ordinarily Scriptural examples alledged against

gainst this which hath been said, concerning preaching of unlearned men that are not learned in the Tongues, nor graduates in the Schools, to deter men from presumption in such respects, to wit, the examples of *Uzza*, and *Uzziah*, and of *Korab* and his company.

But they are mis-applied for the most part, as I shall make it manifest from sacred Scripture.

1. For first, Whereas they are applied against all unlearned men that take upon them the Priests office; they apply them also against *Peter* and *John*, as *Acts* 4. 13. & 8. 1, 4.

2. And secondly, It is manifest in Scripture, That in some sense, all the Elect are truly and properly called Priests, and both do, and ought to offer sacrifice, and to take upon them so far forth, even a Priest-like office.

Reus. For the Apostle *Peter*, writing to the strangers, scattered through *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia*, and *Bithynia*, that were Elect, &c. *1 Pet.* 1. 1, 2. calleth them a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, &c. *Chap.* 2. 9. And a holy Priesthood, ver. 5. And that also to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by *Jesus Christ*. And that they might shew forth the praises of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. And *Rev.* 1. 6. It is said of Christ, That he hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father.

I hope therefore, that none will deny but all the Elect may offer these sacrifices, to wit, these spiritual sacrifices of prayers, praises, and virtuous living, to shew forth the virtues, and praises of him that hath called us, &c.

And that also, without danger of being struck with leprosie, or death, or being swallowed up of the earth, like *Korab* and his Company, or being destroyed with fire, or any such judgment, if they do it in sincerity, and offer not strange fire, like *Nadab* and *Abihu*; And if they charge not others with taking too much upon them, that are called of God and precious, &c. like *Korab* and his company.

Object. But it will be objected, But what, is there no difference then, but all that are elect may take upon them to preach?

I answer, Yes, There is diversities of gifts, and diversities of operations, &c. And there is degrees and measures given out of

the same Spirit : It is onely true of the Lord Jesus Christ, *That to him was not given the Spirit by measure* : And as all the members of the body are not fit for, neither have the same office ; so it is also in the body spiritual, *That one and the self-same Spirit giveth out to every one severally and variously as it pleaseth him* : There is and ought to be feet and hands, as well as eyes and mouth, which are most properly placed in the head.

And though it be true, *That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.*

Yet it therefore follows not, That all that are his have the manifestations of the Spirit.

It is one thing to have the Spirit, and another thing to have the manifestations of the Spirit.

But where ever the manifestation of the Spirit is given to any man, it is given (saith the Apostle) *to profit withal*, in their several places and degrees, according to the measure, or nature, or property of their gifts, and callings, and qualifications : For,

To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom ; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit : And to another faith, by the same Spirit : to another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit : To another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. As 1 Cor. 12. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, &c.

I shall therefore compare such, who (in any of these particulars mentioned by the Apostle) have the manifestation of the Spirit, to the sons of Aaron ; to whom belonged the Priesthood in a peculiar manner, above the rest of the sons of Levi : for such, who have (in any of these particulars) the manifestations of the Spirit, they have, as it were, a visible unction from the holy One, 1 Job. 2. 20, 27 According as Aaron was anointed, and his sons also with him, and sprinkled with holy oyl, Levit. 8. 30, 31. And so were consecrated, and appointed to their charge at the Lords appointment, as Vers. 33, 34, &c. And as Aaron was above his sons, and wore the breastplate, and other ornaments that were peculiar unto him, as Vers. 7, 8, 9. and to him only as the chief Priest ; so the Ministers of the Word are chief, and ought to be so accounted and esteemed in the Church ; and all other officers, as Elders and Deacons, who are resembleable to the sons of Aaron, (if such as they ought,) ought

to be chosen and consecrated likewise, as well as the Ministers : And they should be known and approved, as *men full of the holy Ghost, and wisdom, and of honest report* likewise, or else they are not suitable to be joyined with the Ministers, nor consecrated by them, unto any office in the Church of God, as appears, *Act. 6.3.*

But all that are such, having the manifestation of the Spirit, both lawfully may, and ought to desire the office of *Bishop*, as a worthy work ; or any such office, or liberty in the Church : whereby they might be useful or profitable to the same any kind of way. For as the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall ; so, to profit the Church ought likewise to be their end, and the desire, and endeavour of all that have such gifts : and they may and ought, even to seek occasions, that they might doe good, and desire of God that they might be sent : as the good Prophet *Isaia*, when his lips had been touched with a coal from the Altar, and that his iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged : he readily answered the Lord, even before he had his message, *Here am I, send me.* *Isai. 6. 6,7,8,9.* And they that are zealous of spiritual gifts, ought to seek, that they might excel, to the edifying of the Church. And such, whose end is only the Edifying of the Church, ought not to be restrained, but rather put on and encouraged, and called forth (by such who can, and do discern their proper gifts and abilities for the same) to such employments and ministrations, as they are fittest for ; and might be most useful in : for the good of all, or any part thereof.

1. I say therefore, we may justly compare all such who have the manifestations of the Spirit, to *Aaron*, and his sons ; and they are all fitted and qualified on purpose for spiritual ministration, or profit to the Church in one kinde or other, as their gifts and abilities are fittest for ; and ought to be called and consecrated thereunto, and suffered to administer, as occasion serves, and as need requires.

He that hath prophesie, ought to prophesie according to the proportion of Faith ; or ministry, should wait on his ministry ; or he that teacheth, on teaching ; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation ; he that giveth, should do it with simplicity ; he that ruleth, with diligence ; and he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness, *Rom. 12. 6,7,8.*

One way or other, such who have the gifts, though differing
one

one from another; ought to use them, for the edifying, and good, and benefit of the Church: and ought not to hide their talents in napkins; but to occupy with them for their masters profit. And he whomsoever, that *despise these things, despise not man but God, who hath given unto some, that are unlearned in the tongues, even his holy Spirit,* 1 Thess. 4.8.

2. And secondly, We may justly compare all the rest of believers (that as yet, for the present, have no such gifts, or manifestations of the Spirit) to all the rest of the Tribe of *Levie*, Who though they did not beare the iniquity of the Sanctuary, and the iniquity of their Priesthood, nor minister before the Tabernacle of witness, nor might not come nigh the vessels of the Sanctuary, and the Altar, lest they should die:

Yet *Aaron was appointed to bring them with him, that they might be joynd unto him, and minister unto him; And keep his charge, and the charge of all the Tabernacle of the Congregation, for all the service of the Tabernacle. Whereas a stranger might not come neer unto them.*

But *Aaron and his Sons must keep the charge of the Sanctuary, and the charge of the Altar, that there might be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel: As there had formerly been occasioned by the rebellion of Corah, and in part of all the Congregation, Numb. 18. 2, 3, 4, 5, and Chap. 16. 45.*

For as the Lord told *Aaron*, that behold he had taken their brethren, the *Levites*, from among the children of *Israel*; so them they were given as a gift for the Lord, to doe the service of the Congregation. But he, and his Sons with him, should keep the Priests office, for every thing of the Altar, and within the vail; and that they should serve; for he had given their Priests office unto them, as a service, or gift; And the stranger that came nigh should be put to death: as Chap. 18. 6, 7.

Even so we may justly say, behold, the Lord hath taken all true believers, from amongst their neighbours, and give them as a gift of the Lord, to be joynd with the Ministers, and other Officers in the Church of God, to do the services of the Congregation, and to keep all the charge of the Church, in all outward respects, as for receiving in, or shutting out from the publick assembly, joyndly with them.

But the Ministers, and Officers are to keep the charge of all with-

in the vail; as of the Word, and Sacraments, which they are to administer, in the name of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ; and to take care, that none be admitted, but such who are outwardly, or at least, professedly clean; having their hearts purified through faith, and repentance, &c.

Though yet, this always provided, that as the Levites, *Levit. 8. 14, 15, 16, 18, 19.* Though they all were given as a gift unto Aaron, and his Sons, to do the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation: (Yet) they were not admitted, to administer and wait on the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, but from 25 years old, and upwards; and from the age of 50 years they should cease waiting on the service thereof, and should serve no more, but should minister with their brethren in the Tabernacle of the Congregation, to keep the charge, as *Numb. 8. 24, 25, 26.*

Even so also, Though all believers are given as a gift to the Ministers, and Officers of the Church, to be joyned with them, in opening, and shutting; in binding and loosing; in all such respects as concern the whole Church, for the good of all, as when all must receive, or all reject; all approve, or disallow; all elect, or eject, &c. because that all are necessary, or jointly engaged in such generall business, as members of the body, *1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.*

Yet they are not admittable, in this respect, neither, till they come to ripeness, and maturity of judgement in Christianity; and be established in the faith, and in the trade and practise of Christianity, in all duties belonging thereunto: for there is a childhood and minority, as well in grace, as nature, *1 Cor. 3. 1, 2.*

And therefore saith the Apostle, *Receive the weak, but not unto doubtful [disputations:] Rom. 14.*

Even so say I, the weak ought to be received, but not to intermeddle in doubtful [Elections;] or Ejections, &c. in which they have no skill, nor judgement, and experience in.

For so the wisdom of God accounted fit, to appoint the Levites, in such like service, and respects, that belonged to their charge: Lest by any means, their service and office should be despised, through male-administration, or childish ignorance or defection, and therefore they must not administer, till they came to the age of 25. Years, &c.

And therefore to conclude, an abrevate, from all these comparisons; It is thus much in effect.

Abrev. To wit, All the *Elect*, that are built upon Christ by lively Faith, are lively stones, build up a spiritual house, yea, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2.5. and Chap. 1.2.

So that all Beleevers are accounted as Priests, even from their first ingrafting into Christ by faith, (in some respects) as is before specified.

But as there was Priests of divers orders; so also ought the true Beleevers to be distinguished.

I compare therefore the newly converted to the *Levites* in their minority, till they came to years: and all the grown Christians, that are approved and experienced in the trade and practise of Christianity, to the *Levites* when they came to years of discretion.

And all the Elders and Officers elected by the Church, or that are full of the holy Ghost and of wisdom, I compare to the Priests, the sons of *Aaron*, yea, though they be of such as are not learned in Tongues, if they have such gifts, and qualifications, as are manifestations of the Spirit of God.

And so the Ministers of God, I compare to *Aaron*, who in many things was above his sons, as hath been said.

And who knoweth, but the Lord Jesus Christ, upon whose shoulder the Government lieth, will govern his Church after these examples, seeing the Apostle *Peter* doth thus compare them, as resembling the Priesthood, and not as resembling the Jewish Nation, both Priests and People? for that he doth not, see also, *Mal.* 4.4. And then the danger lieth not against men unlearned, that have the manifestation of the Spirit, and of power, lest they should perish in the gainsaying of *Korah*, because they take upon them, being called by the Church, to preach and administer in the name of God. But the danger lies against such who are sensual, having not the spirit, and yet will take upon them ministerial functions in the name of God, because they are learned in the Tongues, and Graduates in the Schools, *Jude* 11, 16, 19, 20. See *Ezek.* 12, 13. Chap. These are strangers that may not come nigh; *Ex.* 23 *Numb.* 18.4, 22.

But it will be objected, That if unlearned men be suffered to preach, they that are unlearned, and unstable, may wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction; as 2 Pet. 3.16, 17. and may lead others into errors and schisms, and cannot be hindered, nor suppressed;
neither

neither can it otherwise be avoyded; but men that know not the originall, should ordinarily mis-understand dark places of Scripture, and so like *blinde guides lead men into the ditch.*

Ans. I answer that it is true, That men that are both *unlearned and unstable*, do, and will wrest some places of Scripture; and it cannot be avoyded, but there will be *false Teachers*, even amongst us in these days, as well as there was false Prophets in the days of old, as 2 Per. 2.1. And such also, it may be, as shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and shall bring upon themselves swift destruction: And there is no security given out in Scripture, That none that is learned in the Tongues should be of the number of these false teachers: for men that are learned in the Tongues, may be *unstable*, and wrest the Scriptures: and by how much the more they, that are *unstable*, are learned in the Tongues, they are even so much the more dangerous, if they should be suffered.

And therefore *unstability* is a greater fault, and more dangerous then *unlearnedness* in the Tongues: And men may be learned in the Scriptures, or unlearned either, and yet learned in the Tongues.

Men ought not therefore to be inhibited to preach, (lest they should be unstable, and wrest the Scriptures) for then the learned, as well as the unlearned, should both be inhibited.

But such, who (being proved) are found *unstable*, and that they do wrest the Scriptures, no man will deny, but such may, and ought to be inhibited, when they are found out, and convicted of error, or of schism, &c. yea, though they be of the learned.

But to inhibit men before, were to *censure and condemn men before they be heard.* And see Ezek, 18. 20. *The righteousness of the righteous ought to be upon him, as a badge of honor; but the wickedness of the wicked should but be upon himself.*

But the best and surest way to prevent the sowing and spreading of Errors, or Schisms, is to give liberty, that any whomsoever, that preacheth in publique, may in publique also be reprehended (be they learned or unlearned) if they preach erroneously in any Congregation; that so the same Auditory, that hears them preach any Error, or Schism, or false Doctrine, may, by just reprehension from clear Scripture-evidence, be satisfied to the contrary; and have such evil seed purged out quickly, before it grow up, or be spread any further; for so it ought to be: And those Churches are

not rightly constituted, where this liberty is either wanting, or not in use, when the Truth of God is wronged, and wrested, and *turned into a lye*; and when his sacred Word is *huddled deceitfully*, and mis-applied, as it often is, even by the learned in the Tongues, that are *unstable*, &c. And yet no man allowed to reprehend them for it, nor convince them of it, at least not in publique: And how then shall the same Auditory be purged from it, if their reprehension be not as publique, as the doctrine is preached? For who knows that all the Congregation shall every one of them be assembled again? and the doctrine may be such, as may lead them to *perdition and destruction*, both of their souls and bodies.

And this liberty being in use, will doubtless make both the learned and unlearned a great deal more careful, *to keep unto sound doctrine that cannot be reproved.*

And they that plead so much against liberty of preaching of men unlearned in the Tongues, for fear of the spreading of errors and schisms, and yet will not allow this publique liberty of reprehension (as hath been said) to prevent, and avoyd, and purge the same. I can hardly beleve that the spreading of Errors and Schisms is the chief cause that makes them zealous therein, but some other by, or self-respects, which they will not own.

For no man, that is zealous against such spreading gangrenes, but he will allow, and justifie, and approve all possible means to avoyd or stay them, else he is not cordial in that respect: And what means possibly can be more awful, and more suitable, and even necessary, then publique reprehension of publique Errors? The Apostle Paul reprehended Peter before them all, Gal. 2. 14.

And them that sin (saith the Apostle) rebuke before all, that others also may fear, 1 Tim. 5. 20.

But it will be objected, That it were an immodest part for any man to implead his Minister in the publique Congregation; and might disgrace, and disparage, and dishonor him for ever.

Ans. I answer, That it is far greater immodesty in such Ministers to need to it, and to give just occasion by dealing immodestly with the Truth of God, to the disgrace, and disparagement, and dishonor of God; in respect of whom, and for maintenance of whose Truth, we must not know either father or mother, son or daughter, Minister or Master, brother or friend; but to undervalue, disgrace, dishonor, disparage, yea, and even hate them, in compar-
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for thereof : and rather then baulk the Truth, that concerns the good of immortal souls, especially in case, when it may endanger the loss of souls, *so precious is the Redemption of souls, and their continuance for ever* : and of so high esteem ought the glory of God to be valued of us.

He that valueth *himself*, or his own honor, or grace and glory, yea, or *his own life*, better then the *Truth and the Glory of God*, serveth no better, but shame and dishonor for his self-ill ends and pride, &c. And *he that doth truth, and cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God*, He will be desirous to be tryed by the touchstone, even the Truth it self ; and will love him better that lets him see his error (in such a case) then him *that flattereth with his lips*, or holdeth his tongue, and lets him run on in erreneous paths, either in life or doctrine.

And it is a sign, that such men do *[evil]* *that hate the light*, and that will not abide the tryal by the touchstone, in as open and publique a place, as they have held forth doctrine, provided always that it be done with *meekness*, in a loving way, as it ought to be ; for so saith the Apostle, *Let all your things be done in love*. And that there be also a free acknowledgment, by them that do it, of their own weaknesses, and subjection of themselves to all or any Error, and *to be likewise tempted and drawn aside* ; and that they onely stand, and are upheld by the *Grace of God*, of his free accord ; and with a clear manifestation of such material and weighty causes, and considerations, moving them thereunto, as are of greater value and consequence, then the credit, and reputation, and honor due unto such a Minister ; for it ought not to be done upon slight occasion, but matters of weight, and such as will over-balance all the shame and disgrace that may possibly fall upon such a Minister.

And it is a signe, that men come of themselves, (and are not sent of God) if they seek their own glory : or if their own glory be so near and dear unto them, that they cannot be content to undervalue it, to the glory of God, or to his sacred truth ; if they cannot be content to let God be *[true]* and every man a *liar* ; but will rather oppose the truth of God, then acknowledge themselves to have erred from the truth, Jam. 5. 19, 20. It is a shrewd sign, that there is in such men, a spice of that pride, that

exalteth the *Pope*, above all that is called *God*, or that is *Worshiped* : Who arrogate power, and dominion to himself, as if he could not erre ; for all men must beleve, what he asserteth ; and punctually obey his commands, and decrees, though never so untrue, or unjust. &c. Yea, though quite contrary to the word of *God*, and to the light of reason : Or else they must be Excommunicate, out of their Churches : oh horrible pride ! and yet a spice thereof, is doubtlesse to be found in all men by nature : And in the natures of many, that yet notwithstanding have the grace of *God* ; for they are partly *flesh*, and partly *Spirit* ; and it is rare to finde out such a man, as can deny himself, and take up his crosse, and follow *Christ* [fully :] That can endure the crosse, and despise the shame ; for men can very hardly endure to be [crosse ;] yea, though they crosse and oppose, even the truth of *God* ; how much lesse then, would they endure the crosse, and the shame, and spitting ? And they cannot endure to be despised, and dishonoured, when they doe despise, and dishonour *God*. How much lesse then, can they despise the shame, in respect of the honour and glory of *God* ?

But it will be objected, that if this were suffered, any man (that would) might implead the Minister, if he think he erre, even when he hath preached the truth of *God*. And so many raise controversies of disputation, when ever they please, to disturbe and trouble the Congregations ; amongst which, there are some that are weak, that ought to be received, but not unto controversies of disputation.

I answer, as before, that it ought not to be done, but in matters of weight, that may be clearly evinced from the Word of *God*.

And if any oppose, or contradict the truth, either through malice, or ignorance ; It may minister occasion to such a Minister, to convince gain-sayers ; and then the shame, and dishonour, will light on them, and the truth of *God* be the more splendorous, in that respect ; and if it be done of malice, his malice that doth it will be discovered ; and if it be through ignorance, he may be convinced, and better informed ; and will have cause of thankfulness, both to *God*, and the Minister, that hath converted him, and resolved his doubts.

But if it were the custom, that Judicious men might not (only in case of erroneous Doctrine, but of things dark and mysterious, that

that are not fully cleared in their ministrations) put them on by way of question; or desire them to illustrate, or clear such a point; or enlarge themselves in profitable points, and confirm them better; It might be very profitable to the Church of God: For the people will more regard, and consider better, of such particular points, as have been the subject of such discourse, and are, as it were, vindicated, and concluded upon (and so confirmed against all objections, or obscurities whatsoever, even in the publique Congregation, and by the most Judicious in reputation amongst them) then of other particulars.

And this also would be a meanes, to debar all such from usurping the Ministry, that are not able for it: and to convince gain-sayers, and stop their mouths; and to maintain also, and vindicate the truth.

Yea, it would be a means to seclude all such, as are not men of self-denying spirits, such as the Lord Jesus requires; that such should be (if they would attaine to be his Disciples) especially, his Ministers.

4. The Independent principles are likewise stricter, in standing fast to such Christian Liberties (in other respects) wherewith Jesus Christ hath made us free; Then the ways and principles, or at least, the practices of Presbyterians will suffer.

1. As first, concerning their Independency, in respect of other Churches whiles they do well, as Rom. 13. 3, 4. & 1 Pet. 3. 20, 21. & Chap. 4. 1, 2. & 12, &c. For as it is granted by [All:] That in case of necessity, as when a Church liveth where it cannot govern in a Presbyterial way, in a Classcal, and Synodical manner; because there is no Churches to combine with, within convenient bonds: or at least, none that are willing. They allow them power within themselves, both for constitution, and dissolution of such a Church, as they see occasion, for the benefit of the same; and the glory of God, and their souls health.

And therefore seeing all power both for Government, and Discipline, is necessarily allowed them in such a case. Though they are not against the confociation of true Christian Churches, for the mutuall advice, and Edification, and help, and comfort of one another; or in case of admonition, &c.

Yet they utterly deny, to submit themselves, as under the Jurisdictional authority of any such Churches, save only in case of advice

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or counsell, or admonition ; or at most, as sister Churches in every respect, and as they shall convince them from Scripture grounds ; that their decrees, or results, are according to God, and to his Laws and Testimonies, concerning them, either in Doctrine, or Government.

And therefore will not submit, to binde themselves to be ordered or governed, by the votes of such, in any respect, till they first know, what their votes are that they submit unto ; lest they should be enslaved to the wills of men, against their consciences ; which are, or ought to be onely bound by Scriptural decrees, or loosed either : And therefore ought not to be submitted to the decrees of men, not infallibly guided, though never so numerous, or wise and learned ; who all may erre, and often do : and therefore ought not to challenge any binding authority, or power whatsoever, or loosing either, but onely in case, and so far forth as they can and doe, even convince the Conscience, from Scripture evidence, *In the name of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ* ; that their decrees are just, and ought to be obeyed, and submitted to : And it is lawfull as well for a Church, as a particular man, to goe to the Law and to the Testimony, as they are injoynd.

And to search the Scriptures daily, *Whether those things be so, that are decreed, or taught us ; or that are preached unto us, yea, though by an Angel from heaven : And if we finde they teach us another Gospel then what we have received, we must let them be accursed.*

And it is evident, that the Apostles, and Elders, and the whole Church being assembled with one accord ; resolved of nothing, till it was cleared from Scripture ; that all assented, and agreed to it, even the whole Church, as Acts 15. 22, 25.

And it is certaine, that either a particular man, or particular Church, having Scriptural grounds, may say as [they,] *It seemed good to the holy Ghost, &c.* For what the Scripture decrees, the holy Ghost decrees.

And therefore all Assemblies, Congregational, Presbyterial, Classi- cal, Synodical, National, or Oecumenical, should onely be as this in the Acts, *to consider of such matters, as vers. 6.* And to resolve them from Scripture ; that all being assured from Scripture ground, may with one accord, passe sentence with them, being fully assured, that it seemeth good to the holy Ghost, as well as unto them, what
ever

ever is resolved, or decreed, or done in his sacred name. Else they are presumptuous and self-willed, and do usurp authority over the Church of God; if they take upon them to binde and loose; and do not *make it manifest, as they ought to do, from Scripture evidence; that it seemeth good to the Holy Ghost, as well as them, Coloss. 3.4.* And though it is true, that we ought to obey them that have the oversight of us; and that have the Rule over us, and to follow their faith; as *Hebr. 13. 7, 17.* Yet it must be in case, when we know them to be such, as watch for our souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief. And it must be upon consideration of the end of their conversation: that is in Jesus Christ yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever. For they that preach unto us the Word of God, should not be changeable; least they carry us about with divers and strange doctrines, as *vers. 8. 9.* which we must not be, to follow their faith; nor in obedience unto them; That turne away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables, as *2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5. & 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 7, 8.* And if any come unto us, and bring not the true Doctrine, we must not receive him to house, neither bid him God speed, as *2 Joh. 10.*

How much lesse, may such be received as Ministers of God; and maintan'd either by tythes, or other maintenance. And how unlawful is it (therefore) either for Magistrates, or others, to force maintenance, of any such; or to limit men by Parochiall bounds; that in case a Parish, shall heape to themselves teachers after their own hearts, having itching ears, that turn from the truth: Yet men must be enforced, to maintain such teachers, and to heare them likewise; and must not withdraw themselves, as the Apostle injoyne us; nor go elsewhere, unless we can remove our habitations also; which cannot chuse but be sometimes inconvenient; and to our utter overthrow in wordly respects.

All which bondage, is a great infringement to our Christian Liberty, in them that do it, and ought not to be approved nor assented to, by any that desire to keep a good conscience void of offence, both to God and man.

Reas. For how many thousand Parishes, both have been, and are, not only here, but in other Kingdoms, by this means, kept utterly destitute of any spiritual food, for the good of their souls. And that sometimes, even for a whole age together, during the

Parsons or Vicars life, Who once install'd, can never be removed, If he be conformable, to the Government on foot, and can please the greater, or most of the Parish; yea, and though he be never so carnal; If he have but learning, and an outward form of doctrine and profession, in respect of Religion, like the generality of the Congregation: though he utterly deny the power of godliness; yet all his Parishioners, (though never so godly and conscientious) must hold them contented, during such a mans life; for they must allow him his Tythes, or maintenance; and they must not obey the Apostles direction, to wit, from such turn away.

But they must keep to their own Church, and be bound to submit to their own Minister, unless they can remove out of such a Parish. And so in all likelihood, furnish the souls of their whole families; If God be not mercifull, in stretching forth his mercied hand, in an extraordinary unexpected way: [For the ordinary Way] Is by the foolishness of Preaching, (as so the World accounts it.) to save them that believe.

And therefore let men say what they will, but there is no other way, to keep such men out, for intruding themselves, and being intruded upon them; but to let all that are godly, and conscientious, have free liberty, to approve, and receive, or admit, and install, whom they generally allow off; or to disapprove, reject, turn from, disinstall, or eject, whom they disavow. For how else can they, in such respects, obey the Apostles direction; *and keep a good conscience, void of offence both towards God and man, Heb. 13. 8, 9. 2 Tim. 3. 4, 5. 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. 2 Thess. 3. 6, 7, 8. 2 Joh. 10. & Joh. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10 16.*

Let any man tell me but [how] and I shall silence for ever in that respect. How, I mean, they shall answer these Scriptures as they ought to do.

If it be promised that the *Presbyterial* Government will to provide, that none shall be admitted and approved off, but such as are truly spiritual, and of the most able, and fit for the Ministry, that can be found; and then it need not to trouble the conscience of any man in that respect.

I answer, that I cannot believe it, till I see it done, or by what means it should be effected; Whiles [all] have vote, and power in Election, and may, either chuse whom they think good, or be without. All (I meane) that have taken the Covenant, many of whom

whom

whereof, have so little understanding in *spiritual things*, that they are not thought worthy to receive the Sacrament. And how then can such discern, whether men be spiritual and able for the Ministry; or they be but carnal, and such as can know nothing of *spiritual things*, to wit, of the things of God. As 1 Corinthians, 2. 14.

The natural man perceiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discern'd; to wit, through an eye of faith.

But the spiritual man, to wit, a man thoroughly spiritualized, through faith in God; discerneth all things; yea, even the deep things of God.

Object. It will be objected, that all that are godly, and truly conscientious, are not able to discern of the fitness of men, for spiritual employment. And therefore it is more wisdom, to commit the approbation of all spiritual men, to the *Wise and Learned*, and to the Elderships, &c.

Answer. I answer, that He that entereth in by the door, (which is Christ himself, our Archbishop, is the shepherd of the sheep;) as John 10. 1. 9.

And so him the Porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out: And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will fly from him; for they know not the voice of strangers; as vers. 3. 4. 5.

This is the promise, and the plain assertion of Christ himself; That his sheep know his voice, by whomsoever he sendeth it; for the Porter, to wit his (holy Spirit) openeth their hearts; as he did the heart of *Lydia*; even to hear, and obey, and to follow, and doe; to embrace, and to receive, yea, to love, and honour; even such, who bring them such glad tidings, of life, and peace, and of truth, &c.

And therefore, though they be not able to discern, and discover, and judge who is fittest, and the most able; for such, and such employment; yet they can discern, who are sent of God, and bring his message; so far, at least, as not to follow a stranger: for the voice of strangers, is strange unto them; and such as they will not follow: so that the general approbation, of the sheep of

Christ: such especially, who are known to be his, is the note of a Shepherd that is called of God, and sent to preach; or that is called to officiate in any place about spiritual things.

And though they cannot discern who is fit for office; yet if the wise, and learned, should appoint them a *stranger*, or an *hireling*, and that careth not for them; or such whose voice they know not, or to whom the *Porter openeth not*; They ought not to follow, but to *fly from them*, as from *thieves and robbers*; yea, as *sheep from wolves*, that would *murder, and destroy, and devour* their souls: as *vers. 5. 8. 10. 12. 13.*

But if this be their duty, as doubtless it is; if they once discern who are such or such: Then it necessarily follows, that they ought not by authority to be otherwise impelled; but that in such respects, (as do so highly concern the good of their souls, and the souls of their households, and their posterities after them, till the world determine,) They might have liberty of conscience, as they dare answer it, at the great tribunal; to *deale impartially* in all such cases, of such concernment, to *approve, or reject*, as they think they ought. And as considering themselves, even now already in whatever they do; to *be before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels*: as *1. Tim. 3. 21.*

And this is a *Liberty*, wherewith *Jesus Christ hath made us free*, to which it is our duty to *stand fast*. And to *beware of such as shall come unto us, in sheeps cloathing, that yet inwardly are ravening wolves*. And he hath promised, that *we shall know them by their fruits*, Mat. 12. 30. to 35.

And they that would *spoil us of any such liberties*, are in that respect, to be accounted no better then *Theeves and Robbers*: yea, spirituall theeves, that would *spoil our soules*. And such therefore we ought not to receive, nor to bid them *God speed*, where they teach such Doctrine; unless in hope that they do it ignorantly: and that we onely receive them, in hope to reduce them, from such dangerous error.

If it be objected, that men will not allow any maintenance to such whom they may not have vote in Election of; unless it be compelled or forced from them, which is not warrantable, as hath been said, and proved by some.

I answer briefly, that whatever others that are malignant, and enemies to the *Church of God*, will do or refuse, give or withhold

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in such a case, that doth not exempt those who are godly and conscientious from doing their duties, and from being *impartial* in such weighty business that concerns the good of their immortal souls; in which cases *all things should be done without partiality or respect of persons.*

And they ought rather so to joyn themselves, as to maintain a Ministry upon their own charges, then to give their suffrage or vote for such to be installed in a place, as ought not to preach.

And if it were so, that the truly religious would joyn themselves, and engage in Covenant each to others, for this end, that all of them might *speak even the same thing, without partiality or respect of persons.*

There would scarce any accept of a place, but that were either called or approved by them; nor would they continue against their wills, nor act contrary to their general results from Scripture grounds.

But whilst they sit loose, and are partially engaged, and do not *assemble themselves (even their own selves)* for these and such like business that concerns them all; how is it possible that they should know the mindes each of others, or the grounds or reasons upon which they act? or how to resolve fully, so as all may assent, and be far sited in conscience from sacred Scripture, that so they ought to resolve in such and such cases.

And therefore they ought thus to joyn and assemble themselves, and be engaged deeply each unto others, that things of this nature might be justly carried, without partiality or respect of persons, yea, at least in private, if authority will not suffer them to engage in publique; if there be so many within convenient bounds, as may in any possibility do good this way.

5. They are stricter in maintaining the *Power, and Kingdom, and supremacy of Christ*, then the *Presbyterian Government* (as it now stands) will allow or suffer.

Reas. For though they do allow, that the body of the Church should be obedient and subject to the Ministers and Elders of the same, so far forth as they hold forth the Word and Voyce of Christ, as *Job. 10. 4.* and do make it manifest (as they ought to do) from the *Law and Testimony*, that their ways and words, or judgments, and censures, or proceedings, are right, as in the

way of the Churches of *New England*, appears *pag. 100.*
Chap. 5.

Yet in case, when the Officers of a Church shall err, and commit an offence, or miscarry the business that concerns them all, or that in any respect concerns *the glory of God.*

They make bold to over-rule them, and to maintain the truth, and rescue the innocent, or condemn the guilty, and to elect, or eject, receive, or refuse; yea, to remit, or retain, as they finde cause and ground from Scripture; yea, though quite contradictory to the judgments, and decrees, and results of their Elders; and in case of obduracy, even to proceed to censure and to cast them out, as *unsavoury salt*, if their sin so deserve.

And this democracy is necessarily assumed and exercised by the Church, in choosing their Officers, and joyndly with them in admitting members; and in censuring, or acquitting, and *remitting* offenders: And that to preserve the Monarchy of Christ from Antichristian usurpation, lest they should be inforced to let *men at their pleasure bear rule over them*, and become as *men pleasers, and servants of men*, as many have done; and that without all remedy, or hope of remedy, whiles their Officers live, as hath been said before, in the like case: And all, because that they had not power within themselves to censure and remove them; but having their *power* to seek (from other Churches, or from without their own,) could never finde it to remove them by, as in conscience they ought.

But were forced to yeeld even blinde obedience, and to submit themselves to what ever decrees were imposed on them, whether right or wrong, truth or falshood, good or evil.

And what else can be justly expected from the Presbyterial Government, if they require obedience to what ever they decree or determine by Vote, in Classis or Synod, or Congregational Presbytery, when they make it not *manifest as they ought to do*, from sacred Scripture, that such decrees are just, and ought to be executed and obeyed, &c. by all or any whom they do concern, that are under the Government, and of the Kingdom of Christ?

For what is this but to give them liberty for the absolute exercise of arbitrary power, after men are chosen to such an office?

For

For what is it but *Arbitrary power* (in spiritual respects) that is not submitted to the *Word of God*, to the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and to his *Law and Testimony*, as well as such is accounted *Arbitrary power* (in civil respects) that is not submitted to the *Laws of the Land*?

And this cannot enslave but at least sometimes engage or enforce us unto blinde obedience (if we submit thereto,) and that unto men, as if we were necessitated to account of them, as if they could not err.

And therefore doubters such (whoever they are) that either claim (as due) or expect such obedience, do extol themselves even above the Apostles, and expect more obedience, and honor, and service, then they ever required, who were (notwithstanding) more infallibly guided. For they rather commend, then blamed the *Bereans*, for *searching of the Scriptures*, whether those things were so, that were preached by them.

And what may this prove, but not onely the infringement of the Churches liberties, but even the just rights and liberties of the subjects, yea, and the priviledge of Parliament: For if the Parliament were bound, as in duty to God, to establish and confirm what ever a Synod, or an Assembly of Divines, should conclude, or decree amongst themselves, to be just and right in the sight of God, and that without evidence from *sacred Scripture*, What a gross slavery might even their very consciences be subjected to? For was not this the means of introduction of Popery and all superstition that ever was established in the Christian world; to wit, obedience unto Synods, as if they could not err?

And is it not as dangerous now, lest men should yet err, and mislead the Parliament, and the whole Kingdom, yea, and all the Churches? Are we sure that they are more infallible, then in former ages?

Doubtlesse, I say, they ought not to challenge, nor expect or plead for any such obedience, nor that they either do or can do any thing Authoritatively indeed, but what they make good and manifest from Scripture; for then onely, and onely so far forth, they may Authoritatively say, It seemed good unto the holy Ghost and us; as hath been said before: for even the Apostles were but drawn together to consult and consider of those things, neither

neither did they decree, till ~~they~~ stood up and resolved the matter from sacred Scripture, by concluding such a result, as to which they all assented: It was not carryed by multiplicity and majority of votes, what should be decreed; but by the best Scripture evidence.

Neither are any such either fit or worthy to be members of an Assembly, Synod, or Classis, or congregational Presbytery, that can be content to let things pass upon slender debate, and without result from Scripture grounds upon bare votes, it may be inconsiderately gathered, to be made as decrees, for the Churches Government, and that about matters in controversy, concerning faith and doctrine, or ways and manners, or any such like.

Considering that *the eyes of the chief Seers, in a whole Kingdom or Nation, yea in the whole universe, may be covered; and the sacred Scriptures may be unto them all as a sealed book; yea, they may account even the great things of Gods own Law as a strange thing; as Isa. 29. Verſ. 9. to the end, Micah 3. 5, 6, 7, 8. Hosea 8. 12.* And yet may think it strange, that such men as they should either be, or be accounted *blinde*; as those that said unto Christ, *Are we blinde also?*

And therefore it behoves the Magistrates, and all in authority, to restrain and limit them in these respects that so highly concern even the life and death of their immortal souls, and of posterities after them, unto all ages: I say, to restrain and limit them *to the Law and Testimony* in what ever decrees they decree to establish: else they are guilty even of the blood of souls, which they lay open to be bought and sold at the will and pleasure of presumptuous men, that are *self-willed, and lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, &c.* of which sort there is many in these last days.

6. They are stricter, and justly too, in keeping themselves within their own sphere, in that they require not obedience from all the inhabitants within parochial, no nor local bonds; to the decrees of Synods, Classis, and Presbyteries, as *jura divino*; for that can never be proved from Scripture grounds, to be either duty or lawful, but onely so far forth as their decrees are just, and held forth also from Scripture grounds, *in the name of*
God

God, and the Lord Jesus Christ: to be obeyed, or disobeyed; not as they tender the displeasure of men, in what ever authority, place, or power, Ecclesiasticall, or Civil; But as they [tender] the breach of the *Law of God*, or their obedience unto him, or as they fear his wrath, or expect his love, and blessing, &c. Neither do they resolve, to deal with all indefinitely, in a spiritual way; as they are admonished to deal with brethren, *Matth. 18. to 21.* by way of private reproof and admonition; and after that, *to tell it to the Church*; before they be unto us as heathens, and publicans; for many are so to us, even as heathens and publicans; even in the judgement of *Charity*, and certainty both: being yet without in the Apostles sense, *1 Cor. 5. 12.* And what have we to do with them that are without; to whom all things (as yet) are done in Parables, What have we, therefore, to do to judge them, the Apostle knew not, that we had any occasion, nor proper interest or power so to do, save only in general in the publike Ministry. Neither are we enjoined, (for altogether) not to company with such; nor not to eate with such; if they be but (*Fornicators, or Covetous, or Extortioners, or Idolaters of this world,*) as *1 Cor. 5. 10, 11. & Chap. 10. 27.* For we are not bound to Rebuke Scorners, and deale with them as brethren, in spiritual respects; we are only bound to deale with brethren, such who are so called, and accounted of, through their visible profession of Christianity: (not of Atheisme, and grosse prophanness;) such, who never yet thought themselves fit to receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: for how are they within, or in fellowship with us, or in company together, who abhor and hate, and had rather almost be in company with devils, then with such, whose waies are a rebuke unto theirs. And how then shall we in any respect, withdraw from such, who never yet were in company with us, but against their wills; *1 Thes. 3. 6.*

And how is it proper, to judge, or censure; or to remit, and pardon, (as *2 Cor. 2. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 5. 12, 13. Joh. 20. 23.*) such who are utterly incapable of any proper impression, or sense, or dinte of a divine rod: a spiritual censure, or admonition, or rebuke, &c. yea, or of being remitted, though they outwardly reform, till they inwardly repent, and be at peace with God, not only for open, but for all their sins, open, and secret; unless men purposely intended to delude their souls: for though for trespasss against

men, he that is injur'd, upon *Repentance may forgive it*; as *Mat. 18.* but sins against God, he only can pardon, who sees the heart, and whether they repent indeed. And men can only do it, declaratively and effectually, in his sacred Name; according to the appearance or visibility of their cordiall repentance (in their apprehension;) not for one only, but for for all their sins, *1am. 2. 10, 11. & 1 Sam. 2. 25.*

And thus much briefly against the *Presbyterians*, for the time present, though I have more particulars to have instanced in; yet if in these particulars, a reconciliation were made, the rest would follow with more ease.

But these things being true, as I am confident that any rational man (that will but seriously consider of these particulars, with the grounds and reasons, that are here alledged, with an impartial eye) will freely confess, that the *Independents* are justly stricter, and ought so to be, in these particulars; and that their grounds and reasons are sound and substantiall for so doing, and that the Magistrate ought not to restrain or limit them, in the prosecution of these just, and lawful, and godly ends: But to tolerate, and protect them, and encourage them heretunto, by all possible means: yea, though in these respects, they be manifestly stricter then the *Presbyterial* Government, as it now stands, will permit and suffer.

And now having done with the *Presbyterians*, for the time present, in behalf of the *Independents*: I shall turn my hand to the *Independents*, in behalf of *Presbyterians*; for though I cannot charitably conceit them, in respect of their ends; to wit, that they are not good; yet, I have something against them, in respect of their ways, and dare not be partial in the things of God; but must speak out, according to my apprehension, as well against them, as the *Presbyterians*; for it is dangerous to be partial in the Law, or respect persons. *Job. 32. 22.*

1. And first then, though it is not denyed, but that in case of necessity such a Congregation so incorporated, (being men of fidelity; *faithful men*) may ordain themselves Pastors, Elders, and Deacons, as they stand in need, and exercise all spiritual Jurisdiction power amongst themselves, as they see cause, for the glory of God, and the Churches good. For in case, when no other Pastors of other Churches can conveniently be obtained to assist them therein, to whom it more fitly and properly appertains, being

being called by the Church so to do; It is confessed they may do it themselves.

Reas. But in ordinary propriety, as the Apostle saith, *The less is blessed of the greater*; for he so concludes, *Hebr. 6.7.* that it is so without contradiction, proving that *Melchisedec* was greater than *Abraham*, because he blessed him, *ver. 4.7.*

Argu. But Ordination by imposition of hands, is an act of blessing; and is effectual to confer a blessing in the Name of God, if administr'd in faith, *Matth. 18.19.* though otherwise not, as *Num. 1.6,7,8.*

Conseq. 1. And therefore by consequence, The more faithful that men are, and the more likely, such their blessing is to be effectual, and to be conferred indeed; as many instances might easily be produced.

Conseq. 2. And therefore it follows, That the most faithful that can be obtained is the most fit for such an act, because it is most likely, that such their blessing will be effectual, the more and rather.

Reas. And therefore it was, that *John the Baptist* did, according to modesty, object against Christ, when he came to his Baptism, *I have need (saith he) to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?* But our Saviour answered, that he should *let be now*, because that *thus it became them, to fulfil all Righteousness.*

And the Reason was, because in common reputation (at that time) *John* was greater than he: For all men held, that *John* was a Prophet: But Christ as yet had not shew'd forth his glory, in so eminent a manner, as to be so esteemed.

Object. But it is objected, That a [Church of believers] or a company of the [Presbytery] are, in common reputation, greater than [one,] to wit, any [one] man whom they may ordain, and so in that respect, *The less is blessed of the greater*, as *Hebr. 6.7.* For two, (saith *Solomon*) are better than one. And the promise is made unto two or three. *Mat. 18.*

Therefore it follows, if two or three be preferred to one, that a whole Church of faithful men are better than two or three; and greater in esteem, and their prayers, or blessings, are the more likely to be valide and effectual.

And therefore it is not unfit in that respect, but proper and comely,

comely, and so much the more hopeful, that such their blessing, through faith in God, will be effectual, though they want the assistance of some more eminent men (then such yet are) whom they do ordain: *The prayer of a righteous man availeth much, saith James, if it be fervent, Jam. 5. 16.* And how much more available may we expect the prayers of a whole Church will be with God, as it was when Peter was in prison? *Act. 12. 5.*

Ans. I answer briefly, That it is not unlawful, but may be done, and not improperly, in case of necessity, as hath been said.

But, first, observe, That the addition of some more eminent men to be, as it were, the mouth and hands of such a whole Church, doth not diminish, but increase their number of faithful men; if such can be obtain'd to assist them therein, and so by their own Argument so much greater blessings are likely to be conferred at their request.

And it may be sometimes that the prayers of some one man being more earnest then the rest, may obtain the blessing, or some particular request, rather then all the rest; as it is said of *Eliu*, *James 5. 17. 18.* and *2 Kings 2. 12.* *The Chariots and Horsemen of Israel.*

Reas. For it is not because of the number of Intercessors, nor because of the righteousness [only] of such, or so many as shall pray unto him, that he grants their request; but it is rather because of their faithfulness and fervency in such very particular for which they pray, as *Jam. 1. 6. 7. 8.* & *Chap. 5. 16.* For it sometimes falls out, that men that are the most faithful ordinarily, yet may in some particulars be more diffident then the weakest, so that their faith failing them, they begin to sink; as Peter on the water, though he had walked already, through the power of God, yet the sight of a storm struck him into doubts; and you know the place where it is said of Christ himself, That he [could] do no great works there, because of their unbelief.

And therefore it is not the bare form of ordination, though administered by never so many, or never so eminent men, that can prevail for a blessing on such or such a man; but it is the fervency and faithfulness of such who do ordain them that obtains the blessing; for by how much stronger men are in faith in that very particular, so much the more powerful they are with God to obtain his blessing, and the presence and power of the Holy Ghost to be in greater

measure conferred upon him to enlarge and enable him for such a work, and for service to his name in such an office.

And therefore such men, who in the general apprehension of such a Church, are the most faithful and fervent in spirit that can be obtained, and the most inward and familiar with God, ought to be requested, and sought unto by such a Church to assist them in ordination of any such officer, and to be their mouth and hands unto God, even the mouth and hands of the whole Church, who (as it is granted) ought to be present, and to joyn in prayer together with them.

And thus to do, is not to [alienate] their own liberties in that respect, for they may do it themselves in case of necessity, as hath been said, when there is not to be had more eminent and faithful men then is amongst themselves, or if they cannot obtain them: For it doth not take such liberties from them, nor power to use them, in case of necessity, because that others assist them at their request, no more then another Minister, praying or preaching together with them at their request, takes away from them their proper liberty of praying themselves.

And therefore I shall much wonder if any godly conscientious man shall oppose this doctrine, though the custom hath been (as they were instructed by some of their Ministers) to practise otherwise: yea, and though I also speak it in behalf of those of the Presbyterian way, for I do not speak it in behalf of men, but in behalf of the truth, which I ought to esteem before all the men on the face of the earth; I therefore speak it, because I believe, that *this it becometh them, so fulfil all righteousness*: For greatness in reputation ought to be preferred in such publike Ministrations above greatness in deed, for Christ was greater [in deed] then John the Baptist, though not in [Reputation] at the time of his Baptism, and therefore *so it became them, to fulfill all righteousness*, Mat. 3. 24. 15. For without all contradiction the less is blessed of the greater in ordinary ways, at least of the greater in Reputation: John had need to be baptized of Christ, the less of the greater, to this Christ assents; but John was greater in Reputation at that present time, therefore it became them rather to follow the general Reputation, then the inherent power for Baptization, wherein subsisted the greatness in deed in respect of power.

For the Original of Power is only in God, 1 Cor. 3. 5. Not in him that planteth, nor in him that watereth: And is but apprehended.

hended, or fetched out by faith, as by an immediate hand, and accordingly administred, according to the strength or measure of faith, in such an Instrument, by whom such blessing or benefit whatsoever is mediately administred.

It was not properly the *spirit of Moses* that was put upon the *Elders*, Numb. 11. though it was so called, Vers. 17. even the *Spirit* that was on him; but it was more properly even the *Spirit of the Lord*, as Vers. 29. that rested on the *Elders*, and on *Moses* both; and in that respect only it is properly said, That the *Lord* took off the *Spirit* that was on him, and put it upon them, as Vers. 25. 26. 27. for it was no other but the self-same *Spirit*, even the *Spirit of God*, though measured out as it pleased him, as 1 Cor. 12.

We must not therefore expect the *blessing*, because administred in such a way, or in such a manner, no, nor by *faithful men*, (though we may the rather,) but because administred *through faith* indeed, in the name of *God*, whom we ought to acknowledge as the only fountain and original spring from whence it is derived, and variously dispersed, as it pleaseth him, as *Jam.* 1. 16, 17, 18. and is not in the power or custody of men to give the increase, or blessing indeed, as 1 Cor. 3. 7. And therefore all the Ordinances (though never so purely and properly administred, in respect of order, and forms of *Government* or *Administrations*) will be utterly vain, invalid, empty, fruitless, and unprofitable, unless ministred in *Faith*, yea, *through Faith in God*, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and that in every particular: for it is not sufficient that such administrators have *Faith in God* for the saving of their souls, but they must have *Faith* to apprehend his promises, concerning such particulars, whatever they administer, or desire of *God* to be done for them upon such occasions; or else they may not expect to receive such things, as *Jam.* 1. 6, 7. And therefore the most faithful is weak enough for the meanest administration in the Church of *God*.

And therefore the end of ordination being the *blessing*, the means to attain it should be so ordered, as is most likely to attain unto, or acquire this end: we should *so run, that we might obtain*: For, in such publique cases, men often take *Gods name* in vain for want of aiming chiefly at the proper end of any *service, duty, or ordinance* that men take in hand.

But thus much briefly for this particular, because I hope no man will contradict what is here asserted.

2. A second thing that I have against the *Independent Government*, is briefly this, to wit,

That though they do allow of confederation of Churches for advice and counsel, and for the help and encouragement, resolving, comforting, &c. or for the discouragement, forsaking, and conviction, or withdrawing from, as need requires :

Yet they do not allow of any authoritative acting, by an Assembly of such Churches, either for, or against any particular Church, though need require so to do; But do account it sufficient to withdraw *communion*, if they so deserve, according to *Mat. 18.* as the direction is, to deal with a brother in case of trespass, not considering that this directory is onely given out, how we ought to deal, in case of trespass, against man, one brother against another, and that in such trespasses as deserve not *excommunication* out of such a Church, but a private *withdrawing of brotherly fellowship* by that particular man against whom the trespass is committed, to wit, *Let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and as a Publican, Vers. 17.* It is not said, that either such a man, or any other, for trespass properly against man, should be excommunicated from the *publique ordinances*; but they are first admonished *to note such by a letter, and have no company with them, that they might be ashamed,* to see how that will work to bring them to repentance; but they must not for such faults *account them as enemies, but admonish them as brethren, as 1 Thess. 3. 14, 15. and bear them patiently,* yet, though we think of them, that they are *evil men, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25, 26.* For we may easily be deceived, especially in our own cause, and be apt to *judge and censure without moderation*: And *Excommunication* ought onely to be administered in case of sin against God, when we can scarce, in the judgment of *charity*, think any better of them, but that they are *wicked men, cast out from amongst your selves: That [wicked man]* saith the Apostle, *1 Cor. 5. 13.* and of this sort also were *Hymeneus and Alexander, who had made shipwreck of Faith, and fell to Blasphemy*; besides which, or for such like gross and notorious sins, and that against God, we read not of any that were *delivered unto Satan like those, 1 Tim. 1. 19, 20.*

Argu. But this directory of our blessed *Saviour*, going no further but to private withdrawing, in case of trespass, brother against brother, is not sufficient to direct the Church how she ought

to deal, in case of sins deserving that dreadful sentence of *Excommunication*: but we must likewise take in, for further direction, that *1 Cor. 5.* and many other Scriptures, as you shall hear anon.

Consequ. Therefore it follows, That as a particular Church is bound as well to deal with offenders (if they so deserve) by that heavy sentence of *Excommunication*, as withdraw their communion and fellowship from them in case of lesser sins:

Even so in like case, Churches consociated ought to deal with offending Churches (if they so deserve) by that heavy sentence of *Excommunication*, as well as withdraw their communion from them in case of lesser sins: And the Churches censures of *Excommunication* ought not to be bounded within the verge of particular churches against particular persons; but ought to be executed against whole Churches by the sister Churches (consociated and assembled for that very end) if their sin so deserve; as in case of *toleration of blasphemy, or idolatry, or Sabbath-breaking, or adultery, and such like gross profaness* in the Members of the Church, as *1 Cor. 5. 10, 11, 12.* and do not censure them for it. And take notice by the way, That I therefore say [*in the Members of the Church*] because such who are profane, and never professed *Repentance, nor Faith in God, and the Lord Jesus Christ*, though they come to the Church, yet they are not capable of *Excommunication*, because that even in the judgment of *Charity* they are as yet *without*, in the Apostles sense, and are not of such as are called *brethren*; but being already *without*, and in the *power, and slavery, and captivity of Satan*, need no more casting out, nor delivering into him: but it were gross foolery to spend the Churches censures upon such wicked men, neither could it be expected to be effectual against them, nor take impression on them; And therefore the Apostle doth not for altogether inhibit our *companying together with such*, as *Verf. 10.* but *with such* (amongst such) *as are called brethren; with such a one, that they should not eat*: Whereas in another place, *If any man that beleeveth not invited them to a feast, if they were disposed to go, they might go*; for he giveth them no inhibition in that case, but only a directory how to carry themselves, as *1 Cor. 10. 27.*

And it is but a foolish thing to bring men to the stool of *repentance* for some one particular notorious sin, till they can also profess and seriously too, as before God, that they repent for all, both
secret

secret and open, and do hope for pardon. And it is but a deluding of mens consciences, to put them in hope of pardon for *one*, till they repent for *all*, and do resolve to forsake them, *1 Jam. 2. 10. 11.*

And thus much by the way, I do now come to the point, and do briefly assert:

Assert. That it is the duty of true Christian Churches, joyntly confociate, or assembled together, not only to admonish, and withdraw communion, as hath been said; And as it is granted by Mr. Cotton, in the way of the Churches of N. E. pag. 109. *Self. 8.* to wit, *That they look as it, as their duty, to be faithful one Church to another; in like sort, as the brethren of one Church are called to be faithful one towards another; In regard that Churches enjoy, and profess communion one with another, as well as brethren of a particular Church; alledging Cant. 8. 3. & 2 Cor. 11. 28. Look also Self. 7.*

But that therefore, is likewise follows, even from their own argument; That an assembly of Churches, is also bound to deliver *unto Satan, in the Name of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his power* &c. any such Church, as shall so deserve; or the Officers, or Ministers of any such Church, who shall so deserve, if their own Church shall neglect to do it; else, they deal not faithfully with such Ministers, or brethren, not with such a Church, as in duty they are bound, *1 Cor. 5.* after the Apostles doctrine and example, *1 Tim. 5. 19. 20.* as hath been said: Nay, if they but call themselves brethren, or Ministers of Christ, *Rev. 2. 2. 20. 11.* or Churches of Christ, as *Chap. 3. 9.* yet, *Jews and are not.*

They ought, I say, to be dealt with, by Divine authority, in the name of Christ, as *Synagogues of Satan*, as *false Apostles*, as *wicked Iezebels*, as *lying brethren*; And so proclaimed (joyntly) by the Churches, with one consent, and delivered to Satan, that they might learn, not to blaspheme, or not to seduce, and deceive the servants, and people of God; nor call themselves Apostles and ministers of Christ, when they are not; or his Ministers and Embassadors, in such things and messages, wherein they are not; as *Revel. 2. 2. 20.* or call themselves Jews, or of the people of God, and are nothing so, as *Chap. 3. 9.* but do lye notoriously, and that in the name of Christ.

I say, the Censures of the Church ought to pass upon them, in

as publike and declarative a way and manner, according to their sin, as their sin shall deserve; and that in the name of God, and the Lord Iesus Christ, whose judgement it is, that ought to be administered, and publickly held forth in his sacred Name, with the grounds thereof, from the *Law and Testimony*, if men so deserve, even to execration.

Reas. For the like care, and the like means in every respect, is to be used, held forth, and exercised over such sister Churches; whether false or true, if they be so deemed, through their own profession, as is, and ought to be used over particular brethren, by a particular Church; whether such brethren be false or true, that through their own profession, are deemed brethren, or called brethren, as 1 Cor. 5. 11.

And if *Admonition*, and in some cases *Excommunication*, be Ordinances of God, sanctified for the healing of the souls of God's people gone astray; it were a sacrilegious injury, either to the Ministers, or Elders, or to whole Churches, when they go astray, to deprive them of the benefit of such whole some medicines, when the estate of their souls stand in need thereof; as to their own arguments doth plainly resolve, in the way of the Churches of *N. Eng.* Pag. 101. Chap. 3. Sect. 6.

But it cannot be denied, but even whole Churches may so far Apostatize, and go astray, either in life, or doctrine, or government, &c. as well as particular members of a Congregation.

Reas. For suppose all the Congregation do not act so wickedly, as to be Fornicators, Idolaters, or Adulterers, &c. yet they may be induced to connive, and indulge, and be accessary with such in a great measure, as the *Corinthians* were, with the *Incestuous person*, and therefore were sharply reprehended by the Apostle Paul.

And if after admonition in such cases, as are proper for such gradual proceedings, there follow not Repentance, and Reformation; or if any Church shall tolerate Idolatry, Blasphemy, or Profaneness, all sister Churches ought in such cases, to proceed roundly against them. Look in the way of the Church of *New Eng.* pag. 93. But for more certain testimony, examine and compare these Scriptures following, to wit. 1 Cor. 5. 11. 2 Cor. 2. 6. *Dent.* 13. 5, 6, &c. to the end. *Exod.* 33. 7. *Acts* 13. 45, 46. *Iudg.* 20. *Iosh.* 7. 13, 24, 25, 26. *Dent.* 27. 15, &c. *Ioshua* 22. 16, &c. *1ste*

28.10. *Mat. 1. 14.* And such like many Prophetical, Popular, and National curses, which are exemplary for us to use in like cases. And they are no other, but the express mind and will of God, which being unchangeable, ought to be published, and declaratively held forth, as occasion requires; and the more publike, and the more visible and general that it is, and the more faithfully, and emphatically that it is express, and the better it is, and the more likely that it should be effectual for the end thereof; yea, the more voyces that proclaim it, or assent unto it, with affection of minde, and faith in God, suitable thereunto; and it is the more available, and acceptable with God, and efficacious and operative on the hearts of men, to deter, and restrain them from any such wickedness. And what need we any more, or more plaine injunction, then the Apostle hath given us: to wit, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be had in execration, yea maranatha: 1 Cor. 16. 22. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 10.*

They had once occasion to have used these curses in the name of God, against some Members of famous Churches in *New England*; and some it may be, might finde occasion to use them here, against such spies as bring an evil report upon the Land of *Canaan*; the *[Spiritual]* I mean. And doubtless if used in faith, as they ought, they would be effectual; for many such Spies are culpable of judgement from the hand of God, as well as these, who dyed of the plague before the Lord; as *Numb. 14. 36, 37.* Yea, good men, whose souls shall be saved, may yet deserve to be made exemplary by the hand of God, in such a case, for the terror of others; as so (no doubt) were *Nadab, and Abihu, and Uzza*, and others, as we may well hope; for even *Aaron* himself, was admonished by *Moses*, how to carry himself, lest he also should dye before the Lord, if he were provoked, *Numb. 18. 3.*

And this kinde of *Divine Authority* is far more awfull, and fit to be used in all such cases; then carnal, worldly, and humane authority; as the effects would prove, if ministered in faith, as *James 1. 5, 6, 7, 8.* and by the power of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, as *1 Cor. 5. 4.* to wit, *through faith in his name*; confidently believing, that according to his promise, he will make it effectual; and ratifie in heaven, what ever they agree on, or binde on earth, or denounce, &c. as *Matth. 18.* For if a man have faith in God, yea though never so little, if it be but as a graine of *Mustard-seed*,

provided it be concerning such very particulars, as he prayeth for; or desireth to be done; yea, though it were for removing men, and planting them in the midst of the Sea, it should doubtlesse be effectual, *Matth. 18. 18, 19, 20.* Yea, *what ever you ask of God in prayer, heleeve that ye shall receive it, and it shall be given you,* saith our Savior Christ, *Mat. 11. 23, 24. Mat. 17. 20. Luk. 11. 17.*

And this Divine Authority, this power through faith, being ministered in his Name, as it ought to be, is a far greater, and more awful authority, then any humane power, or carnal authority, that can be given by men, in what place soever; for it is indeed *the power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, spoken of, *1 Cor. 1. 5. It is the power God.* *Mat. 18. 18, 19, 20.* fetched down from heaven, by the hand of faith.

3. A third thing that I have against the Independent Government, is their strictness in trial of all, whom they admit to partake of the Sacraments. But lest I should be over-tedious, and there being many Arguments, which have long been opposed each against other, concerning this maine difference, which if once reconciled, all other differences, would easily be agreed.

I shall therefore propose my own apprehensions, partly abbreviating what hath formerly been said in some particulars, by way of retule, and then shall answer some objections concerning this main difference, and shall so conclude, lest my Book should swell to a tedious Volumn.

After that a particular Church is constituted and organiz'd, for administration of all the ordinances they ought to observe; their ensuing Rules, as most consonant with the practice of the Apostles, and of all the Churches in the Primitive times, and most suitable to the Word of God, and the rule of Charity therein contained; and to his own ways, held forth to us for our imitation, who profess our selves to be followers of God as his dear children, and to walk in love, as Christ hath loved us; and do account the end of the Commandment to be love; out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.

1. First, It ought to be their chief care and endeavour, that the preaching of the Word (which is the chief means that God hath appointed for the saving of souls) be with all diligence, publicly administered, both to believers and infidels, even to all corners, with this end, and respect chiefly, That such who are already believers, might

might be edified in faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus, and that others might be convicted, and converted, and turned to the faith; yea, and that even all such whom God hath ordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ: for care should be taken, that none should be lost, nor go astray, nor be offended in any respect, that neither bruised reeds should be broken off, nor smoking flax extingished, or quenched; nor that which is halting be turned out of the way, but rather healed, and restored, yea blown and kindled, and bound up, and mollified, and helped; and strengthened, by all possible means that God hath appointed in his holy Word.

2. Secondly, as saving of souls, and edifying of the Church is the chief business to be cared for, and indeavoured by the Church, and as the ministry of the Word is the chief means tending thereunto: so it necessarily follows, that not only for the present, but for future likewise, provision be made, that none be elected, nor admitted into office, as Minister of the Word, to labour in the word and doctrine, nor to rule and govern, or minister to the poor, as Deacons, &c. but such who are so qualified, as the Word of God requires they should; that so they might not be lead, either by blind guides, or Idiot shepherds, dumb dogs, devouring wolves, soul-murderers, false Prophets, that sew pillows under all armbolts; and flatter men into a fools paradise, being partial in the Law, or profane and scandalous in any respect: as the Scripture is large for direction herein, how they ought to be qualified, through faith, and love, which are in Christ Jesus, Act. 6. 3. Not any officer, no not the Deacons, but care should be taken, that they should be men of honest report, full of the holy Ghost and wisdom.

3. Thirdly, that in any possibility, this might be secured, and provided for, not only for the present, but for future generations (as much as possible) it ought to be the care of every Member of that body corporate, that visible Church so joyned, and constituted;

That none be admitted, and joyned, or incorporated together with them, either first, or last, either for the time present, or for future generations: But such only, in whom all the members of the said body (In the judgment of charity) may justly confide, that they will not, to their knowledge (either in Elections, or Ejections, approbations, or refuls, in any Church-business, either for receiving in, or casting out, or any matter wherein their voice or suffrage is justly requisite, as a member of the body) deal unjustly or impartially, perfidiously or unfaithfully, but as before God, and the

Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels; lest in after times, by means of ungodly men, which might be crept in, if care be not taken, and provision made, to keep such out, they that are ungodly, might heap to themselves Teachers after their own hearts, such as have been mentioned: And therefore so far forth as such body corporate is in any respect politically joyned, for the good of the whole, every member being part of the whole, and therefore having interest in the whole it self, and that not only for the good of the rest, but for it self likewise; and therefore ought in conscience to have vote and suffrage amongst the rest, in all such cases as concern the whole, for the good of all.

So every member ought to be careful, that none be admitted as joyned members, and incorporated with them, as a body politique, but such in whom they do and can confide; That they will not, to their knowledg, in any such case, either deal unfaithfully concerning the whole, or any particular member, in any such respect; but, as hath been said, for *the glory of God,* and the good of the body.

And not onely so, but tryal should be had concerning their knowledg and spiritual understanding, both in *the things of God,* and that concern the Church, in respect of Government and Discipline thereof; that they be both *sound, and able to discern even of things that differ,* in some good measure; and be likewise conscientious, suitable thereunto.

For, as they that are *weak ought to be received, though not unto doubtful disputations:*

So, *they that are weak ought to be received, but not unto doubtful Elections,* and such like business, as necessarily require, that men should understand and know, what they do, when they act therein.

And therefore it was, that though *all the Levites were accepted of God, and taken for all the first-born of the Children of Israel:*

And given as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the Tabernacle of the Congregation: and to make an attonement for the children of Israel, that there be no plague among the children of Israel: When the children of Israel came: nigh unto the Sanctuary, &c.

Yet they were not required, as called of God, to go in, and wait on the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, but from twenty five years old and upwards; and so but to continue till they came to fifty years old, and were then to cease waiting on the service thereof, and should serve no more, as *Levit. 8. 18, 19, 24, 25.*

So that it evidently appears, That till they came to ripeness of years, and to a suitable discretion and gravity, for such holy service, it did not appertain unto them to administer in such a service.

And so no more it doth to men that are true Believers, and truly faithful, till they come to maturity and ripeness in knowledge, and have their *Wiss exercis'd*, as the Apostle saith, *so discern both good and evil.*

For it is all one, to be led by others that are *blinde guides*, as to act of our selves *ignorantly and blindly*; not knowing what we do, or speak, or whereof we affirm; For we may speak evil or good, and that injuriously, of the things we know not: And so, through *blinde guidance*, perish in the ditch.

4. And fourthly, This being so, and that such Church affairs are of such weighty consequence and concernment to every member, and for the good of all, and for the saving of souls; That it is not possible men should be too provident and *circumspect* in these respects.

It is therefore requisite, and that which is the duty of every member of such a body, to take care, that none be admitted to be incorporated, and joynd with them, to have power and vore in the general business, but such onely as are known and approved for faithfulness and sincerity in true Christianity, in the practise of piety and of religious service and worship of God in all such duties both private and in publique, as God requires.

And though they be thus known and approved by some that are Officers and members of such body politique, Yet for fuller satisfaction unto all the rest, it will be needful that they should openly and publickely, before all the Church, not onely *profess their faith in God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and their repentance and resolution through the grace of God, to forsake all their sine, and to carry themselves suitable unto such profession both before God and men.*

But, for further security and satisfaction to all the Church, they ought to be engaged, by entering into Covenant both with God and the Church, to continue faithful and just, and to deal *impartially* in all such respects, according to their knowledge, as God shall assist and strengthen them so to do; and thus far, and in these respects, such particular body can never be too careful, nor take too strict tryal of such who are admitted to be Members of the same.

But if they be not careful and strict herein, the *men of this world shall rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them herein*; who in civil Corporations are careful and strict, that none be admitted to have vote amongst them, in Election of Officers, for the Government thereof, but such only as (having served an Apprenticeship some certain time) are experienced amongst them, and practised in their Trades, and are so made free; and that saying of Christ is justly verified against all such, *That the men of this world are wiser in their generation, then the children of light*, and will be applied in displeasure against them, if they know these things, and will not obey and do accordingly; yea, even the *blood of souls* will one day be required even at their hands, if they will not be careful and faithful, and provident in the use of means, which properly tend to the saving or damning of immortal souls.

5. And fifthly, on the other part, for the *Administration* of the *Sacrament of Baptism*, and of the *Lords Supper*, such particular Church ought not to be strict, nor ridged and severe, but with all charity, meekness and patience, bear the *infirmities* and burdens of others, and may not please themselves, as these Scriptures hold forth unto us, *1 Cor. 16. 14. & Chap. 13. & Chap. 10. 32, 33. & Acts 2. 41, 42. Chap. 16. 15. Chap. 8. 37. 1 Cor. 1. 16. Mat. 23. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.*

And therefore, first, the Sacrament of Baptism ought to be administered unto all such children, one or both of whose legitimate parents are *true believers*, I mean, believers of the *true Christian Faith*, though yet for the present their faith is not justifying, in respect of themselves, but merely Historical, as *Acts 2. 37*. If they be not *dogs or swine, scorners of*, or barkers against the ways of God, and his Church and People.

And this also is but only to be expected to be held forth or manifested to the Church in the serious and publick profession and acknowledgment thereof in the publick Congregation.

For it was no more that *Phylis* required of the Church, and *Peter* of the *Jaylor*, whose whole household was baptized of him upon such profession: Yea, though they be such men who are not admissible to the blessed Sacrament of the Lords Supper, by reason of scandal, which may lie upon them; yet if they earnestly desire the salvation of their children, and being such who, in their minority, were baptized likewise, and professing a purpose to amend their ways, and turn unto God, they ought not to be put back, but to be baptized, and their parents admonished how they ought to instruct them and bring them up, and that they themselves also should bring forth service unto *God*, for repentance, as the Covenant of God made with them in Baptism in their minority requireth of them, if they will not be accounted Covenant-breakers both with God and man; and so their charge lyeth even at their own doors, and the Minister is clear, and the Church satisfied, if it be serious and in publick, &c., for all outward Ordinances ought to be administered according to the judgment of *Charity*, and ought not to be restrained to the judgment of *Certainty*, but according to *Love* or *Charity*, the properties whereof are not to think evil, but in believing all things, love all things, and to take all things in the better part, and not to judge or condemn according to the appearance, but righteous judgment, and as we can make it manifest that we ought so to judge.

And secondly, in like manner for Administration of the blessed Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is only needful that such who would be admitted to partake of it, should in the publick Congregation make open profession of the true Christian Faith, and confession of, and repentance for their sins, with a resolution to abandon and forsake them, and so walk worthy of that vocation wherunto they are called of God, and of such communion and fellowship with the Church of God whereto they are admitted. Provided always, that they be admonished beforehand of the danger and judgment that they are liable unto (if they either for the present deal hypocritically with the Church of God in such publick profession, & do but lye and dissemble before God & men) as did but justly befall *Ananias* and *Sapphira*: And likewise of the judgment and censure that the Church is bound publicly to denounce & pronounce against them in suspending them again from such communion; if they can again with the dog to his vomit, and with the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire, and will not be reclaimed by gentle means

means to forsake their sin, and so the fault shall lie at their own doors, if they do dissemble, or turn again; and both the Minister and the Church is guiltless herein before God and men, for they cannot justly deny them the Ordinance, though they have sinned notoriously; if they freely confess such their notorious sins, and profess repentance, and a full purpose of amendment of life; and that they are persuaded that God hath pardoned, and doth and will accept them in Jesus Christ, and save their souls.

For what know the Ministers, or the whole Church, but that they are converted, and turned unto God with all their hearts, if they so profess? And upon what grounds can they lawfully deny to administer the same unto any such, though their sins aforesaid have been as scarlet or crimson dye in the sight of men?

And who knoweth but such publique engagement may oblige them in conscience for future time, and for fear of the judgement of God against them, to keep their Covenant, & amend their lives, and turn unto God; and cleave unto him even with all their hearts, and find mercy with him; whereas on the contrary, if they should be rejected, or deferred and rebuked, and not accepted and beloved; when they so profess, they should do as much as in them lieth, even to destroy their weak faith, and so quench the sparkles of their smouldering flax, and break in pieces such broken vessels, whom, for ought we know, God hath freely accepted and received into mercy, and for whom Christ hath died, and ordained such Ordinances to increase and strengthen their feeble faith as well as for the strong and most faithful Members of the Church of God: For who would have thought that Christ should have called *Euchors*, the *Publicans*, and dined with him, rather than any of the faithful and godly people of the Jews at *Jerusalem*, who doubtless believed as well as he, and to have eaten and drunken with *Publicans* and *sinners*? But he gives the Reason, *For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*, &c.

But it will be objected, 1. That these are novel Distinctions and Divisions, that some should be admitted to have their children baptized, and neither of the parents admitted as yet to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

2. And again secondly, That some should be admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and yet not be admitted to be incorporated Members of that particular Church, nor have votes in

Elections

Elections, and admissions or ejections, and censures, &c. as the members have; this is novel and strange.

But I answer, This is more novel, then the sacred Scripture and primitive Examples; as nothing doubt, but to make it manifest; and that these distinctions and divisions are of absolute necessity in a Church rightly constituted, and governed, and disciplined; and the Ordinances of God rightly administered, both to the weak and strong, as they ought to be.

1. And first then, I shall endeavor to make it good, that the children of such have been baptized by the Apostles themselves, upon bare profession of *Historical Faith*, without either confession of their sins, or profession of their Repentance, and a resolution of amendment of life; that we read of in Scripture.

And in my apprehension, this is either clear from the Baptism of the *Nazarans* household, and from the ordinary *Tender* of Baptism to the whole households of all that professed bare *Historical Faith*, to wit, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God; or else our grounds are to seek for the Baptism of Infants, *Mat. 16. 15, 21.* *10. 34.* and *Mat. 23. 37.*

And if they be such parents, who have been baptized in their minority, their childrens case is no other, but in equal respect with the Grand children of such parents whose Grand-fathers are holy, but their own parents profane, who yet ordinarily are accounted admittable.

2. And secondly, concerning admittance of all to the Sacrament of the Lord Supper, that do desire admittance, and will in the publique Congregation profess a true justifying, and lively Faith in Jesus Christ; and if their sins have been notorious, do freely confess them, and profess Repentance, and a resolution of amendment of life.

I cannot see how any Church can deny to admit them, whatever they have been in former times; but that they ought to administer the outward Ordinance upon that ground, without any further tryal or examination; and ought not to defer the acceptance of them, with all brotherly love, and kinde respects, as dear brethren; for so in the judgment of *Charity* (seeing they cannot know the contrary of *truth*) they ought to judge, as hath been said before. And there was never more required of

any in the primitive times, as 1 Cor. 16.14. & Chap. 13. & Chap. 10. 33. 33. & Acts. 2. 41. 42. I shall therefore engage any that oppose this doctrine, to shew a Scriptural example on the one hand, as there is many on the other.

3. But thirdly, That all these should at their first admission to the outward Ordinances, *bring but babes in Christ*, be likewise admitted as visible Saints, and members of a visible Church, and should so be approved of by such a Church and every member thereof, and incorporated with them politically to have power and vote in Elections, &c. (in my apprehension) were very absurd.

1. For, first, till their sanctification be visible indeed unto such a Church, how can they approve them as visible Saints? this were deeply to engage the members of the Church to dissemble their judgments, which is not lawful, for they must *lay aside all guile and dissimulation*, as well as all *uncharitableness*, in *judging of one another*, as 1 Pet. 2. 1.

2. And secondly, They ought not to make any judgment at all, but leave it to God, whether they stand or fall to their own masters; but in cases of certainty, in which they have good ground for a full persuasion this way or that way, left by any means, they should wrong their brethren, or the Church of God; for they should sometimes *quench the smoking flax*, and *break also the bruised reed*; and sometime again disparage and disgrace the judgment of the Church by approving such as do but deal hypocritically.

3. And thirdly, This were as much as if the Levites should all have been admitted to attend on the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation from their very childhood, as well as after that they were come to years of discretion: for the case is justly parallel, as these Scriptures will prove, *Levit. 8. 18, 19, 24, 25.* and 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. Rev. 1. 6.

Reas. For thus I compare them, All the *Elect* that are *built upon Christ by a lively faith*, are *lively stones* built up in *spiritual house*, on *holy Priesthood*, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5. & Chap. 1. 2. So that all Believers are accounted as *Priests*, even from their first ingrafting into Christ by Faith.

But as there was *Priests* of divers Orders, so also ought the

true Believers to be distinguished; I compare therefore the newly converted to the Levites in their minority, till they came to years; and all the grown Christians, that are experienced in the trade and practice of Christianity to the Levites, when they came to years of discretion: And all the Elders and Officers, elected by the Church, I compare to the Priests, the sons of Aaron; and so the Ministers to Aaron himself; and who knoweth but that the Lord Jesus Christ will govern his Church after these examples paralel hereto, seeing the Apostle Peter doth thus compare them as resembling the Priesthood? 1 Pet. 2. 5. 9. Chap. 1. 2. as hath been said before.

4. And fourthly. This double Reception is clear also in my apprehension, from the Apostles own words; *Them that are weak* (saith he) *receive, but not unto doubtful disputations*; and therefore by consequence not to *act, or vote, or exercise power in doubtful Elections, and intricate business, which, for want of understanding, they are not able for, till their wits be exercised in spiritual things to discern both good and evil.* It is not proper to admit them, or approve them as Joynt Members of such body politick, till all the rest of the Members be in some good measure satisfied, both of their abilities (sutable, and of the sincerity of their hearts and intentions for the good of the same.

But for further satisfaction, that these are no novel Distinctions or Divisions of the Church, but of ancient use in the policy of the Churches in the primitive times: Consider the words of Origen, alledged against the Romanists, who recites the words of Origen to be these, to wit, *That it was the custom of the Christian Teachers first to examine such as desired to hear them, of whom there were two Orders.*

The first were Catechumens, or beginners. The other was of such as were more perfect. Among whom there were some ordained to enquire into the life and manners of such as are admitted into the Church. That they may banish such from the publick Assembly that pervert scandalous men.

I say, Let it be considered, whether the policy of the Church in those times was not justly paralel to that which hath been said, and whether it be not also sutable to the policy of some civil Corporations, who ought to be followed in all wise policies, that may tend for good of a body spiritual, as hath been said.

For as the king, so long as he is a child, differs nothing from a
servant, though he be lord of all, his councilors, lords and Govern-
ors, take the same appointment of the father as the father doth in a wife
not unfavourable, so too the very same reason, that being a childhood
and minority of Grace, as well as of Nature, is the same in all

Reason tells us, that it is not fit, nor good, nor safe, nor likely to tend for the good of the body; and a bulwar of government, or vote in elections, should be committed unto such, who are not yet capable of such a business, or are doubted of, whether they do intend the good of the whole, no more than women are to have vote amongst them, nor any specified in these parallel instances.

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And they have fully perceived, and have in their minds, that
 such a man as this, who is a man of God, is a man of God.

And they are fully entitled to their freedom of opinion, without being voted in by the Government, and to be able to express their views on the subject, as their representatives are entitled to do for their constituents, and to require their attention to what they expect to have done.

3. And thirdly, the Elders chosen, by all the joint members of
 said particular Church, and ordained, shall add and word be a
 are fully paid to the said church, as being an addition to the
 particular and particular members, above the rest of the Society, Le-
 ters for the same, and with the holy spirit, as well as a person,
 being, going in and out of the church, and continuing in the Priest's
 Office.

And they are fully parallel, as before the war, classes and en-
rolled in the *Trinity* system, as look for the divergence and manner
of study, as were admitted into the *Claremont* and *Trinity* schools.
And they are fully parallel, as the *Trinity* and *Claremont* schools
are, in the *Trinity* and *Claremont* schools.

4. And finally, the affairs of the Churches, which are
observed by the Elders, with all the gift of study, Num. 16,
17, 18, 19, 20, 27.

Are justly parallel, to *Moses* the chief Priest, who figuratively represented the Lord Jesus Christ, and governed, and ministered in his sacred Name, and was above his Sons.

And they are justly parallel, to the teachers in the Primitive times, who were chief in government; as well as in all other ministrations, in the Name of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore are called *Angels*. Revel. 3.

And they are also parallel, to the *Majors* of Cities; who though they are chief in power and command; yet it is by consent, and according to the agreement, both of the Aldermen, and of the common Council, who are chosen by the freemen as well as the Mayor, for the agitation and transacting of all their business; for the good of all.

But it will be objected on the other part, that this publique profession of faith, and repentance, and of a resolution to amend our lives, and to walke worthy of such vocation, will be thought too much, considering that many, both men and women, are bashful, and timorous, and unfit to speak, and declare themselves in the open Congregation.

Answer briefly, that they may come before hand to the Ministers and Elders, and signifie their minds and desires unto them, and desire them to express so much in publique on their behalf, to signifie the Congregation of their desires and resolutions, and of their repentance; and hope in these respects, and it will be sufficient, that they testify their assent to what they express for them, and in their names and behalf.

And how can the whole Congregation be more easily satisfied in these respects, that men are cordial and sincere in such desires, then by doing it publicly in the open Congregation. Who may all beare witness of such profession; and if they turn back, and live not suitable in some good measure, they may all joyne in their publick censure, in like manner, as in their admittance.

And it cannot be denyed, but that which is the duty of every man and woman to believe, and do, before he approach to receive the Sacrament. That he ought not to deny, to profess in publique before all the Congregation, that are of that profession, with whom he desires communion.

And no man will deny, but that these ensuing duties are requisite, and necessary to be believed and done, before we approach to this Ordinance.

1. First, *Repentance* for all our sins, with *confession* of them, such as have been notorious and publike, if they be objected against us, even in the publike congregation; with a resolution to forsake them, and amend our lives, &c.

2. *Faith* is a necessary duty, before we approach to receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; for without *Faith* we cannot receive the things signified; we cannot eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, but by a lively *Faith*.

For the outward bread and wine, being but the Sacrament or Signe thereof, is not the thing it self, that is thereby signified; for the one may be eaten by *dogs* and *swine*, but the other cannot, but by him onely that hath true justifying and saving *Faith*. And therefore this *Faith* must at least be [*professed*,] else the most charitable judgement cannot think them prepared for this ordinance, If they deny to *profess* it before the whole Church.

3. Thirdly, *Love* is also a necessary duty; *Love* unto God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. And love to our brethren, and neighbours, and the whole Church of God.

For a true *faith* worketh by love; and he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love, and he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death, &c.

And therefore no man is fit to receive the Sacrament, that is not reconciled, both to God and men, and in charity with all, as these Scriptures shew.

But it will be objected, that if all children of such beleeving parents, who outwardly profess, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, must be admitted to the Christian baptism; Then, all must be admitted without distinction: For all will profess, that they so beleeve, though they be never so wicked and malicious enemies to the Church of God, and even unto Christ himself; but our holy things must not be given unto *dogs* and *swine*, Mat. 7. 6.

I answer, True, if they be *dogs* or *swine*; that is to say, if they be such, as *bark* against, and *speak* evill of the *Waies* of God, and of his *Name* and *Truth*, or of his *Ministers*, or *Disciples*, and *Children*, &c. for righteousness sake:

They may, and ought to be excluded from all such privileges, and their children likewise. Or if they be *despisers* and *scorners*

of such holy things; turning with the dog to his vomit, and with the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire: they may be excluded, and ought so to be, if they can be proved apparently to be such. But as the Lord inhibited the condemning of any man, or putting him to death under two or three witnesses: yea, though one witness might never so fully assert and assure it to the judgments of men, yet it must not stand.

Even so also, it must either be apparent, and clearly witnessed. Or it is not sufficient to exclude their children from their outward Ordinance; they themselves being such, who have been baptized in their minority: for they are no other but in like condition with grandchildren of godly parents, who are not approved as actual believers, and yet their children are admitted unto baptism; if they be not so profane, as to account them dogs, or swine, &c. as hath been said. If they turn not to be enemies to the Church of God. *He that is not against us, is with us*, saith Christ.

Objell. But it will be objected; If the Root be not holy, how may we expect that the branches should.

But the Apostle plainly asserteth it, that such, whose parents are both of them *unbelieving*, are *unclean*. Now this he only meaneth, that they are outwardly to be accounted *unclean*; for he doth not so judge, as if all were Reprobates, that are borne of such parents, but that they are not to be admitted, as the children of the Church, to the outward privileges, till their hearts be purified through faith in God, when they come to years: and therefore this Doctrine, is quite contrary to the Apostles assertion.

I answer briefly, That I list not to be contentious in this matter; for in this case, as no man ought to be *compell'd* to bring *his children unto Christian Baptism*; so no man ought to be *compell'd* to Baptize any; but to doe in these things, as their charitable judgments shall engage them, in conscience of their duty unto God, and to their Christian neighbours, and to the Church, &c.

For there is strong arguments on both sides, the quintessence whereof, I shall briefly propose on both parties, and leave them to their consciences, to engage them to either, as they think best.

And first then, for answer to this precedent Objection, I do confesse that this argument were unanswerable, if it were certain that the Apostle spak it of such *heretics*, as have *irrevocable* sayings, and

and justifying faith, and that such as they can likewise demonstrate for satisfying of the Church that they are such believers.

But if the Apostle only mean it, of such a faith, as upon profession whereof, the Eunuch was admired; to wit, *a believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* And that there is no name given under heaven, by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ.

If such as these, I say, be the believers, intended by the Holy Ghost in this place, then we remain still, in the same dubitations as we were before. And so all that profess; yea, or do but confess, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, must be accounted in the judgement of charity, as born of God, because that Flesh and blood could never have revealed so much unto them, as 1 John 4. 2. as Christ said unto Peter.

Provided always; that such their Profession be serious and cordial, at the least, outwardly.

Objection. But it will be objected, That Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of Faith, which he had when he was uncircumcised, Rom. 4. 11.

Answer. Therefore it follows, That their Seal of the new Covenant, to wit, Baptisme, should not be administered unto any but such, or to their seed, that have faith before, as Abraham had, in respect of this seal.

Answer. I answer, That this Argument might likewise hold the better; If the Faith here spoken off, was, *3.* were believing in God, to justification.

But it is but as the other before spoken off: It is but said, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now believing God, that what ever he promisseth shall come to passe. And believing in God unto justification, are far different; for the Devils had the first but only the Bless do attain to the second.

For even Abraham himself, as the Apostle saith, was justified declaratively by Works, and not by faith merely; Namely, when he had offered his Son upon the Altar, James 2. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

Consequ. Therefore it follows, that this faith also, though it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and shall also be imputed to all that so believe God.

Yet it is of it self but a bare historical, and only an outward historical profession in the sight of men, and it is no more but such as the devils have, and therefore tremble; but it is not saving and justifying faith, till men can apply the promises of God, through Jesus Christ, peculiarly to themselves, as to beleeve that God is *[their God,]* and that Christ is *[their Saviour,]* which many of the Elect can hardly attain to till their death beds, their faith is so weak; but we must not *destroy their weak faith, for whom Christ dyed;* we must not *quench any smoking flax, nor break asunder the bruised reeds, nor turn aside that which yet balaith out of the way;* but it should rather be healed, or bound up, or blown, and kindled by all such Ordinances, as might incourage them to hold on, or that might strengthen their faith, for they ought to be dealt with as *[children,]* by such doctrines and principles as are accounted the first principles of the Oracles of God, because they have need of milk, more then of strong meat; and what is Baptism, but one of the first Principles? as Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14. & Chap. 6. 1, 2. Yea, Baptism is such an Ordinance as the Apostle Paul asserteth plainly, That he was not sent to baptize, but to preach the Gospel; accounting Baptism a more inferior Ordinance then preaching of the Word, though they sometimes minister it.

For the Ministry of the Word is a more spiritual Ordinance and Ministration, for it is not Baptism that now saveth us, to wit, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, (which is but the outward sign) but the answer of a good conscience, when our hearts are purified through faith by the Holy Ghost.

And the Word is called, *the Word of Faith which the Apostles preached,* and they did attend more constantly on the Word, and commanded others to administer Baptism that were of less esteem for the Ministry of the Word, that they might not be hindered neither by that, nor by serving of tables from that spiritual Ordinance for the saving of souls.

And it is plain from John the Baptists Confession, that even his Baptism was far inferior to that of Christs, by his holy Spirit; and it is plainly said, that *there went out unto him Jews of Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, confessing their sins;* yea, such whom he accounted generations of vipers, were likewise baptized of him; for by a continued discourse by way of admonition he speaketh (even to them) saying, *Vers. 12. I indeed baptize*

[yet]

[*you*] with water to regenerate, &c. Mat. 3. 5, 6, &c.

But it may be objected, That even *John the Baptist* prophesied of *Christ*, that he should baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, and so he also did within a few days after his ascension; and that his *seed* is *rich and*, and that he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner, but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire; as *Verf. 12*. And therefore it follows, that though *John* admitted all that came in a promiscuous manner, yet *Christ* will purge more thoroughly, and blow away the chaff, when he hath gathered his wheat; and therefore it appears, that it is his mind that his floor should be thoroughly purged, and all his wheat gathered.

Answer true, but heed must be taken, that none of the wheat be lost; it were better to retain the chaff and all, then lose any wheat; and there is sometimes wheat so clothed with the chaff, that it cannot be unclothed by the threshing instrument, but it will appear like the other chaff; and again, there is some other chaff that is so like wheat, that you can hardly discern it, till you know it by the weight; and so it is likewise with men not infallibly guided, they cannot discern to judge at all by the Rule of Certainty, and therefore of necessity they must only judge by the Rule of Obedience; Till the Lord himself shall come, and sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver, and shall restore all things, as *Mal. 3. 3*. & *Chap. 4. 5, 6*. I mean, in Spirit; first, to restore all things before that great and fearful Day of the Lord, for every mans work shall be tried by fire, to wit, [the fire of his Spirit], of which sure it is; and this Day of the Lord is near at hand; the fire is a little already kindled, and the light thereof doth a little shine, but our gross combustibles are long in kindling, and there is much water cast upon them by such who should blow them to make them flame, yet such waters shall be dried up to their prejudice and loss, though they may be saved themselves.

It will be objected, That the promise runs both to Abraham and his seed, and therefore the seal of Circumcision must needs be applied to all Abrahams seed in their generations, till the coming of Christ, whom that peculiar Seed, in which all Nations, yea all families of the earth should be blessed: But now the promise, and so the Covenant runs, but to them and their seed, thus and of the faith of Abraham, who, in that respect, is the father of us all; they

that are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham; but not the other.

Argu. But wicked men that have lived all their life long where the Gospel hath been preached, and yet live not only as Infidels, but rather like *Athists*: How is the Promise and Covenant properly sealed unto them, or to their seed, save only so many of them as the Lord his God shall call? How shall it so, so much as seem lawful to apply it to their children, especially considering they do it but of custom, more then conscience, when they bring their children? And this custom was, it may be, chiefly ment'd by the Laws and Canons of the Church formerly in use, to which impulsive means was adjoynd; so that if they had not brought them, they might for ought they knew, have been excommunicate both out of Church and Markets, for so far the Excommunications, after Aggravations, were extended; and how then shall we know their desires to have their baptized now are so much as cordial, much less can it be known that they are so much as meer historical *Believers*; that continue so obstinately profane after so much preaching, which they have long heard, and the Gospel read, which all that were ordained to eternal life, believed at the first preaching of it in the primitive times, and how then shall we so much as think that they believe the Scripture, or any such thing, as *salvation in Christ*, either temporal or eternal?

Ans. I answer, What know we but their children are elected, and are of those to which God will shew mercy: What know we, but some of their Predecessors were such as loved God, and kept his Commandments; and therefore the Promise of shewing mercy is thousands in them that so do is ground of hopes unto them, *Ezek. 36.*

And besides, the Promise runs but to the children of *Believers*, that are of Faith; for those only are the children of Abraham; and then it will necessarily follow, that so many of those children of *Believers* that prove not *Believers*, but profane, must not have their children baptized, no more then the other, till they come to years, and do desire it themselves, being *Believers* also, which will condemn some Independents practise, and enforce them to yield, either to the one or the other; or at leastwise, that if such as bring their children to be baptized, can but prove that any of their Predecessors, even to a thousand generations, have loved God, and kept his

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Children; they must baptize them, as well as such children of prophane parents, that were both born, and educated under faithfull Parents: for their profaneness is so much the more gross, and obstinate, and incorrigible, by how much better means, and cause they have had of amendment. *100 y.* And therefore grant the one, and you lose the other.

Object. But it will be objected, that all that were baptized in the Primitive times, as *Act. 2. 41.* were admitted likewise unto all Ordinances, if at years of discretion, as *Act. 2. 41, 42.* it is said, that *They that were baptized, as well as continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer, as ver. 42, &c.*

Conseq. Now then it will necessarily follow, that none were admitted unto baptism, but that were likewise *admittable* unto all Ordinances, if at years of discretion, and therefore none ought now to have their children baptized, but that are *admitted, one or both parents to the Sacrament of the Supper.* Considering both Ordinances are alike sacred, as appears from these Primitive examples.

Ans. I answer, true; and so we ought to account them, in respect of administering them to any at years of discretion. And as for the children of such; If you grant the one, the other is confessed. But the difference shall both hold as before, whether men should be admitted, and their children likewise, upon *profession of faith*, merely *historical*, or upon the *holding forth of justifying faith*, as *visible belief*. Concerning which I am of opinion as is before shewed, but desire that both parties, might in this respect, without offence, or hate-burnings, each unto others, walk in love, and by the Rule of Charity, without judging or censuring each other, as every man thinketh, and is fully persuaded in his own heart, as before God, and not as following men though never so eminent in other respects; for they are not infallible. And this is certain, that we read not in Scripture, of any at all, that desired baptism, that were *reg. back*; And it is not safe to act on principles, that are not grounded there; but on the other part, all that gladly received the word, without any more trial, even above thousand souls were added to the Church in quicky, *Act. 21.* they had no time for any great trial of so many.

But the the arguments being so strong on both sides, especially concerning

concerning *baptisme*, so that many godly and grave Divines, and holy men, are fully perswaded in their very souls and consciences, that they ought to doe the quite contrary one to the other in this respect.

It therefore followes, that neither of them ought to *compel* each other to their own principles nor ways herein, neither ought the Magistrate to *authorize* the one against the other, but leave them both at liberty in these respects, to be stricter or remissier, as they think they ought; seeing a *full*, and *clear*, and *satisfactory* result, cannot easily be *produced from sacred Scripture*, to which all must necessarily assent unto. For to *Impel* unto either, by Civil power, were manifest *tyranny* over the very consciences of the one, or the other; and therefore ought not to be done; but as they tender the wrath and displeasure of God, and will expect his judgement, who having begun, will also make an end, *Dent. 32. 41, 44. & 1 Sam. 3. 12, 13, 14. & Ps. 2.* If such be of the seed of the Jews (Spiritual Jews I mean) See *Ester 6. 13. for he is not a Jew that is one outward, as Rom. 2. 28, 29.*

I have more particulars to propose betwixt them, tending to unity, concerning other points wherein they are at variance, which I could not conveniently include in one volume; as the case stands with me at this time: But I purpose (God willing) with all possible speed, to put them forth; proposing them as (in my apprehension) an infallible result from sacred Scriptures, clearly deduced; by unanswerable arguments.

1. What kind of Civil Government was commended to the Jews, by the Lord himself, as the best form, or way of Government for them to establish in their Common-wealth, of all other, who were his peculiarly beloved people above all the Nations under heaven.

2. How far forth the Magistrate ought to compel by force and power, to the keeping of the Law; to wit, the *Moral Law* of God. And how far forth it is not lawful to use any force in that respect.

3. What is the best Rule to observe, and use, and the most proper and warrantable, to assure an honourable, and liberal maintenance to all Godly and faithful Ministers of the Gospel of Christ.

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